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FROM WALES TO WISCONSIN

SELECTIONS FROM THE PLAS YN BLAENAU PAPERS

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INTRODUCTION

FROM WALES TO WISCONSIN - THE PLAS YN BLAENAU PAPERS

N.L.W. MS.6478D.

From Wales to Wisconsin : The Plas yn Blaenau Papers

The Plas yn Blaenau Papers came to the National Library of Wales in 1946 just after the Second World War, at a time when Anglo-American relations had been subjected to the prolonged strain of wartime alliance. Nowhere was this fact more profoundly felt than in Wales for whom Atlantic understanding had been not only an emotional but a physical necessity. Wales, as a nation pledged to the cause of peace, had in the recent war experienced the fear of enemy attack on her very coastline, and American support had been a daily safeguard. Moreover Wales with her long history of support for ideological causes had also a century and more of migrating population crossing the Atlantic to North America. If common ideals were a basis of Welsh American friendship, no less so was the human factor, as generation after generation of Welsh Americans retained ties binding the two countries firmly together. And so, when in 1946 Miss Susannah Meredith of Caernarvon presented to the National Library of Wales a file of some correspondence and papers of the family of Williams, Plas yn Blaenau, Llangernyw, most of the letters being written from America to family in Wales in the 1840s and 1850s, it was a gift made at a memorable time in Anglo-American relations. Highlighting not only the human ties of understanding between the two counties, but also the shared ideals and sympathies as well, the Plas yn Blaenau papers record the stay of Welsh farmers from Denbighshire coming to the newly formed settlements of Wisconsin Territory, U.S.A. during the 1840s and 1850s. The Williams brothers, Elias, William, Michael and John had all helped to settle the prairie wastes of Wisconsin in these years, and in 1946, a hundred years later, their letters made particularly memorable reading.

The Williams of Plas yn Blaenau, Llangenyw, Denbighshire, were of yeoman stock. Their maternal grandfather, John Hughes, had left small legacies to his grandchildren, whose father and mother then took possession of the family farm, Plas yn Blaenau. John Williams, Hughes' son-in-law, had from 1826 farmed Plas yn Blaenau with his wife, Ann, raising a large family of children, of whom all, save one, were still living in 1840. [1]

At this date Great Britain was hit by a serious agricultural and industrial depression, and "the hungry forties" saw many leave Britain to seek a better living overseas. In North Wales quarrying and mining were

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1. St. Asaph Probate Records in N.L.W., Will of John Hughes, Llangernyw.
   St. Asaph Probate Records in N.L.W. Admon. of John Hughes Williams, Llangernyw, 1847.

temporarily hit[1], and agriculture fared even worse. The General Enclosures Act of 1845 provoked widespread agrarian unrest, and though the bitterest of feelings between landlord and tenant, rich and poor farmer, were temporarily stilled, the widespread migration of miners and agricultural labourers at this time was proof of the dissatisfaction prevailing with the illiberal government measures specifically, and the hard economic conditions generally.[2] Moreover economic distress alone did not send many on their way. Powerful feelings of discontent with the established order of Church and State were strong in North Wales, as seen in the radical discontent of the growing number of immigrants entering the United States and the strong sentiments of political dissatisfaction they expressed.[3] Thus "the distant paradise", as the Welsh called the United States, was viewed by Welsh migrants as a land famed for continuing support of Richard Price's concepts of liberty during the nineteenth century's struggles for liberal advance.

In 1840 Wales had just enjoyed a decade of victories for liberalism: Parliamentary reform; municipal reform; reform of Church and State and above all the abolition of Slavery. The United States had also kept pace with this liberal upsurge. Under President Andrew Jackson the existence of the newly won right of universal male franchise had seen America turn to paths of very great liberal advance indeed. Not only did Jacksonianism equate liberal nationalism with democracy - and popular democracy at that - it saw to it that "the age of the common man" was an era which sought to obtain conditions ideal to the greatest extensions of liberty and equality possible. Slavery, however, was not abolished, a factor which provoked strong anti-slavery sentiments among Welsh settlers who were to be among the foremost in

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1. A. H. Dodd, A History of Caernarvonshire, 1284-1900, (Caernarvonshire Historical Society, 1968), pp.254 ff.

2. A. H. Dodd, Ibid., pp. 240 ff.

3. See for e.g. the Plas yn Blaenau letters and the Bob Owen Croesor Purchase, "An Account of a Journey from Caernarvonshire to West Pawlett". N.L.W. MSS.

demanding its abolition in America too.[1] Significantly many of the powerful landlords of North Wales held West Indian estates as well, and the wide spread unpopularity in Wales of these magnates had not decreased since the British emancipation of slavery. In spite of American intransigence over slavery and the economic depression throughout the United States in 1837 and 1838, the urge of many Welshmen to migrate to that country was not noticeably dampened; indeed since the 1830s the new lands in the American West became increasingly desirable as a home offering even a more free and more prosperous life. Wisconsin Territory became an especially favoured Welsh area of settlement during the 1830s, dairying and wheat farming and shop keeping proving great attractions to newcomers[2]. And, indeed, Welsh Prairie, spreading from Lake Erie and through Columbus County, the southernmost part of Wisconsin, came to be the seat not only of Welsh settlement in the Territory but an advance post for frontier settlement. But not long after the Illinois and Central Rail Road was soon to pass through the region, turning frontier farms into settled and cultivated regions.

To this area came the two young Denbighshire farmers, William and Elias Williams in October, 1844, and from that date until May, 1865, members of the Williams family continued to correspond with their family in Plas yn Blaenau, Llanegernyw, Denbighshire. Writing from "Plas yn Blaenau, Wisconsin Territory, their letters describe the problems of settlement, the eternal shortage of money, good roads, bad and good harvests, exploration of the prairies, the coming of the railroads, the hazardous nature of farming, the spread of Welsh communitarian activities, hymn singing and revivals, the presence of schools, excellent transport - in short all that went to make an American prairie community. Sadly, the letters for the Civil War period are lost, but from October, 1844 to February, 1861 there is a full and faithful account of the Williams' brothers life and work - encompassing in all nearly sixty eight letters, revealing at every turn some new factor of Welsh settlement in Wisconsin.

Early settlement Elias was to discover could be very difficult.[3] Settling with his brother, William, in a small Welsh community, Welsh Prairie,

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1. See for e.g. The Tennessee Papers, N.L.W. MSS. The Papers of Samuel Roberts of Llanbrynmair, or Clare Taylor, "Samuel Roberts and his Circle, Llanbrynmair and America 1790-1890", (Publication forthcoming).

2. A. H. Dodd, op. cit., pp. 308-310.

3. N.L.W. MS. 6478D. The Plas yn Blaenau Papers. Letter 5.

near Milwaukee, he describes the work of a new settlement - the yearly harvesting, making roads, and the founding of a school - for literacy was not to be neglected in a new land. The first farm of the two brothers, William and Elias, was to be in Portage County, near Milwaukee, the good back prairie loam, the spring, the timber all delighted the brothers with their regulation one hundred and sixty acre lot.[1] Government land, they found, was plentiful, and they had many Welsh neighbours to share their life with them. Land speculation, that curse of frontier life, was already beginning, not surprising with the presence of sawmills already in the vicinity, giving additional value to the land. But conveniently settled as they were, with Lake Erie and its famous canal linking them easily with New York, with good Welsh settlements already around them, and large settlements like Racine and Milwaukee nearby, not even the high cost of living could at first deter the two brothers', in any case the wild game of the prairies would surely be sufficient to feed them.

So golden was the prospect in their new home, so firm their wish that others should join them, that the brothers retained a copy of a travellers' guide, showing that emigration to the United States had already become a standardised affair.[2] Most travellers were still advised to bring provisions sufficient for the voyage, and a certain quantity of dry goods. Even the route to Wisconsin by 1845 was already widely travelled, and clearly marked; New York was the best port of entry, and so into the American Prairie, but New Orleans could also serve as a gateway to the west.[3]

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1. Under the provisions of the Land Ordinance of 1785 all incoming settlers could purchase no less than a quarter section of federal land at federal prices - although pre-emption (squatting) had begun by the 1830s, few settlers being able to afford even the relatively low government land prices. It was not until the Homestead Act of 1862 that the powerful Western demand for free land in the West was met. Even then the hardships of unscrupulous land speculators selling good lands dear was to continue for the rest of the century.

2. Ibid., Letter 7

3. Ibid., Letter 8. New York remained a Mecca for the Welsh Wisconsin settlers.

By the end of 1846[1] the brothers had finished their first spell of house building, and though their farm implements were still extremely simple (ox drawn carts), they had increased their holding. But even so the hazards of farming were never far away. The soil was light and grey beneath its top layer of black loam, and already timber was in short supply, and what was there was of rather poor quality. Nevertheless the land was selling rapidly; and soon Government land would not be available. Were the family to invest in the project (and here the first of a long series of letters begins - all urging that family funds be sent to assist them) it would be in their interest - as beautiful new farms were theirs for the asking, were only a little capital available.

So remote was the settlement that outside events were to prove of small interest. Plas yn Blaenau, Wisconsin Territory, remained a self contained little community, concerned with survival chances and little else. Thus the brothers, although possessed of an informed interest in the Texas situation in 1846, especially if it were to curtail overseas trade, were as concerned with immediate local interests: the founding of a Welsh association and the needs to be as fully informed about the country as possible before settling - and citizenship took five years. Their reliance on their Welsh home continued, the need for Welsh woolen clothes and boots, or for drugs for the chemist shop which Elias intended opening. But even as they begged their family in Wales to send funds - so they promised in return to guide them in the setting up of a new and better life.[2]

1847, their third year of settlement, was a quiet one, both brothers now being married men, though the hardships facing the new settlers are vividly brought out, especially the problem of ready money, as seen in the constant demand for funds from home. When the Homestead Act was to come in fifteen years later - giving free land in the West to prospective settlers, its want had been long and keenly felt, not least by the Welsh Settlers.

Michael Williams, a third brother, joined the group in 1848, and though his first impressions of Wisconsin were enthusiastic: poor, small houses, it is true, but towns and roads were developing rapidly - the continuing

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1. Ibid., Letters 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

2. Ibid., Letters 17, 18, 19.

hardships of settlement, and the continuing lack of ready money still continued.

The long cold winter of 1848 to 1849 helped the hardships of settlement very little. Michael, the most recent settler, turned quickly from farming to shop keeping, running a "drug store" for the increasing settlement round about. Indeed, William predicted in 1849,[1] the year of the great gold rush to California - that they would soon be linked in Plas yn Blaenau, Wisconsin, both to the Atlantic and the Pacific. The Great Lakes and rivers of the Continent would surely accomplish this, whilst steamboats from the Mississippi came to within eighteen miles of their settlement, thus making the markets of the Central, Eastern and Southern United States all readily available. Welsh life on the prairies had taken a hold, however, and the brothers' letters reveal their love of Welsh Customs, and their desire to create a freer, better Welsh community, with revivals and hymn singing, free from the autocracy of Britain.[2] Like earlier Welsh pioneers they write vividly and graphically of a journey of exploration into the wilds of the territory, meeting Indians, exploring the lands, learning of the wildlife of the area.[3] Indeed, the letters of this year, significantly the year following the conclusion of the U.S. - Mexican war which brought in such vast western gains to the entire continent, are most interesting documents of frontier America. Characteristically, rather too interested in their own farming lives and interests, the brothers' letters rarely describe any but the events of their own local agrarian community. Nonetheless, the Williams, newcomers to the land, seem by their letters to be caught up in the nationwide fervour of "Manifest Destiny".

Although "farmer carefuls" husbandry on the prairies could bring increasing returns, and John Williams, the fourth of the brothers, came to join his family in Wisconsin in 1850, farming was soon to become too great a problem for most of the Williams' brothers. The slow returns did not compensate them entirely for the freedom of farm life in America, and John almost at once began to contemplate entering business as Michael had done, shop keeping being another favoured Welsh profession. Elias alone found his

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1. Ibid.. Letter 36.

2. Ibid.. Letter 37.

3. Ibid.. c.f. David Williams, "John Evans Strange Journey", American Historical Review, 1949.

farm prospering, but the Welsh settlement as a whole had already created an indigenous life of its own, and William became a J.P. and lawyer. At nearby Oshkosh, the Welsh settlement had increased extensively, and a Republican school was founded. Steamers were plying the Great Lakes, and Congress was putting through a Bill to bring Railroads to the area.[1] Even as early as 1856 transportation changes and technological advances had already extended quite far into the American Territories. So far from simply finding American life very "primitive", in comparison with Wales, or being very dependent on New York or the mother country for their supplies, the Williams brothers remark not only on the "freedom" of their life, but even the betterment of it materially - roads in the case of transport, even horse drawn, being considerably in advance of the North Wales home.[2]

Throughout the difficult period of the 1850s the Williams made slow headway - John's business apparently failed and he returned to Wales in 1957, the other brothers leading a quiet family life, tending their store and their growing families. Indeed the absence of letters for this decade may perhaps reveal that with the growing tensions of prairie life and American life, together with the long absence from Wales, ~~that~~ the brothers' time was too occupied for them once more to write long family letters.

A few letters in 1860 from William Williams and Mary Anne (his sister) to their mother in Wales take up the tale again, however.[3] Slowly they are repaying their debts to their family in Wales, and their sister, Mary Anne came to join them as a most welcome immigrant. Their religious life was their great preoccupation. Revivals had brought benefits to Wales, their own lives in America would powerfully benefit, William felt, if the revival there were to spread to Wisconsin. But by 1861 the disaster had begun, and as de Crèvecoeur's idyll had been shattered nearly a hundred years earlier, so too the peace of Welsh farm life in the Wisconsin prairies was to be broken by War. A small fire destroying part of their property, seemed almost insignificant beside the National Conflagration raging as the Southern States seceeded from the Union with the election of the prairie lawyer, Abraham Lincoln, as President. Wisconsin, though somewhat removed from the scene of

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1. Ibid., Letters 48, 49, 50.

2. Ibid., Letters 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63.

3. Ibid., Letters 64, 65, 66.

conflict, had wheat in abundance to sell - but nationally she could not ignore the situation. As the problem of the scarcity of money grew, and the secession of even more Southern States came like a "monstrous crow" to darken the peaceful prairie, and in the next few years the war like a tidal wave was to engulf the prairie scene. Wisconsin although not an area of conflict, was to contribute extensively to the war effort, and many Welshmen[1] from Wisconsin were to contribute extensively to the Northern Cause. Unfortunately the Plas yn Blaenau papers virtually close with Elias' letter of February 11, 1861, written home to his mother in Wales. What were the further reactions of the Williams family to the war no one can say. Only one other letter, that of May 12, 1865, gave any further clue. ~~Writing to his mother from New York, Elias and his sister were trying to return to Wales. What were the further reactions of the Williams family to the war no one can say. Only one other letter, that of May 12, 1865, gave any further due~~ Writing to his mother from New York, Elias and his sister were trying to return to Wales. Elias, the most successful farmer of the brothers, now found himself facing mounting financial burdens, and, indeed, the terrible rate of exchange was preventing Mary Anne and himself from travelling just yet. Moreover his indebtedness to his mother remained. Twenty years in Welsh Prairie, Wisconsin, had not brought prosperity to the Williams' family as they prepared to return to Wales.

If one regrets infinitely the absence of Civil War letters and the apparent failure of John and even Elias to find prosperity in America, none the less the value of their letters is high. As a record of settlement in America the brothers' letters are illuminating and the small everyday details of farm life in the American Middle West in the 1840s and 1850s passes before us. The hardships of making a living on the prairies before the Civil War if they did not produce a protest movement as powerful as that of the Populists, yet produced in the Welsh Governor Bebb of Illinois[2], and above all in President Abraham Lincoln himself - ~~both~~ leaders of the highest order, so that the famous American Presidential election of 1860 became in some measure a prairie election. The Williams' failures and hardships during their prairie years were not unique. Indeed, it was not until the 1890s, and they, significantly were years of great agrarian protest, that really intensive settlements of the prairie began - years after the Civil War broke the calm

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1. Clare Taylor, "Wales and the American Civil War", Class text for nineteenth century American History, U.C.W., Aberystwyth.

2. William Bebb, Governor of Illinois, Campaign Manager of Abraham Lincoln, and descendant of a famous Llanbrynmair family, was a cousin of 'S.R.' Llanbrynmair, who came to America to join him in 1856.

of the Williams' life there. If the Homestead Act came too late to bring relief to the Williams brothers, if their letters prove how difficult were the foundations of American prosperity, if the land of "King Wheat" was created by infinite toil and hardships, nonetheless the lure of a home in the West was fortunately too great a prize to deter many for long. The golden west was to remain a cherished dream for a long time to come.

Many of these letters are written in Welsh, though the brothers were bilingual and wrote as easily in English. They are farmers' letters, and yet vivid accounts of prairie life as seen by Welshmen who cherished their way of life, their language and their country's ideals which they tried to establish in their new home. I am very grateful to Miss Bethan Jenkins, B.A., who translated the Welsh letters for me, to Mrs. Gillian Glover who typed and prepared the booklet; and to the Staff of the National Library of Wales who generously gave assistance. The Plas yn Blaenau Papers needed so little introduction; the letters speak for themselves and are a very great record of Welsh American partnership.

Clare Taylor.
Aberystwyth.

March, 1973.

T H E P L A S Y N B L A E N A U P A P E R S

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF WALES MANUSCRIPT
6478D.

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of Wales in 1946 by
Miss Susanna Meredith, Caernarvon.

Letter 1

Dear Parents,

I embrace this opportunity to inform you of my proceedings. I reached Taporley about 9½ that night Monday about 6½ in the afternoon. I left Taporley for Hartford to go by the Mail Train to London , we were detained on the road about 2 hours in consequence of the other train got off the rails - but not the least accident happened. We arrived in London 20 before 8 Tuesday morning - stop at London till about 12 at night when we went on board the Countes of Lonsdale Steamer - bound for Hamburg. We embarked 4 o'clock Wednesday morning we had a very fine weather all the way but I have [sic] very sick for a day arrived at Hamburg 10 o'clock Friday night - we expect to commence working tomorrow - Mr. Buck Engineer and two other young men are with us.

This is the most beautiful country I ever saw in my life, it stands on the river Elbe about 60 miles from the sea. It is about the size of Liverpool, there are beautifull walks around the Town Free of everybody, full of flowers and beautiful trees.

They dress here uncommonly good. You may think they are all Ladi- They are very clean and handsome. They seem to live easy and comfortable, they are themselves in the walks at night. They are uncommonly fond of music, all sort of fruits are plentifull and cheap - the weather is very agreeable the country rather level.

I am happy to inform you that I am quite well hoping you are all the same.

Please to give my best respects to all friends accept the same yourself

This from

John

Alton a
Sept. 6th/40

P.S. I am not able to give you our address yet - <u>in hurry</u>.

Letter 2 Bronhaulog, August 11.

is from Wales [August 11] Hannah is back home, very unwell. William is to become a teetotaller - a great benefit. The writer [John Williams's daughter] wishes to buy a new cloak.

Letter 3 Conway Oct. 13/40

Ann Williams to her husband John.

He is to come to fetch her bringing two of the best cheeses.

Letter 4 Wrexham, May 1/41

William to his parents, Ann and John Williams.

Is kept busy in the shop and the Iron works are also busy. Not many respectable people go to the Calvinistic Chapel in this town - they mostly go to the Weslyan and Independent Chapel, but he has a good mind to get a seat in the Calvinistic and Independent Chapels. It will not cost more than half a crown a quarter and he can go to either when there is anything particular in either.

N.L.W. 6478D. Plas y Blaenau Papers.[in Welsh] - Iowa Agency.

(Letter 5 from Elias Williams to his brother, October 22nd, 1844.)

He says that he longs for his brother's return, and that Lewis Jones feels the same way. Lewis Jones has been working on the road and is thinking of stopping the work for a while in case the money will run out. He says that he has had the corn in a while ago and that they are preparing to sow the wheat. The weather is very wet here at the moment. He says that the new house is ready, and that it will have to be measured soon. R. Roberts Cefn wants me to make a piece of the road opposite the woodland Cefn Castell for him I thought that In Jones and S. Davies said, when you were making the road for him, that they would carry some soil from it, but they did not as they thought the soil too useless. He wants 1/6[a rod?] for doing it, and the piece is about 18[rods?] He then talks about the school, and gives some news about different people.

Letter 6.

1845 October 22. [Welsh. Beaufort, transcribed]

Willian & Elias [Williams], Wisconsin to their parents.

Dear Parents,

I dare say you have long expected to hear from us, but since arriving in Wisconsin the writer has been unwell for three weeks and Elias has been traversing the Country in search of a farm that it was impossible to give you any information respecting the Community &c. He has at last fixed upon Portage Country, when we arrived last Wednesday from Milwaukee. Where I had been since I had been taken poorly. It was the effect of travelling on the Canal and I would warn all my friends against that conveyance, but to take the Railway - Elias enjoys most excellent health he says never better - we have bought a farm of 160 acres part prairie part timber opening on to a fine spring upon it, it is quite in a new Settlement. We have several Welsh settled about us, we have no doubt but what this place will be full in a very few years as the soil is so very good. We (the Welsh) are going to build a Chapel here as soon as we can, we are going to build our own house this week, we have bought everything necessary for the house and dairy also a yoke of oxen and a waggon, we intend to sow about 20 acres of wheat next spring,. our farm requires very little clearing as we are not obliged to cut our tree down besides what we want for our own use. There is plenty of Government Lands about here at present but it won't be so long as the rage is for coming to this part from other parts, of the states as well as from the old countries, also speculators come and buy up the best land - we have a Saw Mill about 8 miles from us and 2 barn mills about the same distance on each side of us. We like the appearance of the country and we consider it healthy - we never saw such wheat [shoots {?}] in our lives, our soil is black loam, there is going to be a high road made through our farm next Spring for Columbus and Maddison the Chief Town in Wisconsin, we are 8 miles from Columbus 8 miles from Fox Lake, 16 from Lake Buckway when the [?] market town is to be 20 from Fort Winnebago. The price of wheat is 75 cents a Bushel about [?] of your money for it and plenty of diamonds, butter very dear and scarcely any to be had for money about here, we must get some as soon as ever we can - There is no Beef or Pork to be had as for mutton I have seen no sheep here. The only meat we get are the prarie Hares

and Partridges - Elias shot four Hens at one shot on Saturday last. They are the size of farmhouse hens and very fat.

You must plan to tell John Williams Plas [?] your old servant that it is our opinion he will do better here than at home. The best time to come is early in the Spring and you may tell all others that [sic] have a little money to buy land the same thing. We do not recommend others much to come at present. When we have been here twelve months we can give you more information.

You may also tell Jno. Williams that we shall be very glad to see him at our house and we will do all we can for him.

Give Elias' respects to all the singers and tell them that there are good singers here. We desire our best respects to you and would be very glad to see you all here. The sooner the better as the land in the best districts is taken up very fast, there was 2000 dollars paid at an office near us last week at this late time of the year, what must it be in Spring.....This from your Sons. Willian and Elias.

Elias B. Williams,
Farmer,
Nr. Fox Lake,
Portage Country,
Wisconsin Territory,
U.States.

no. 7

Printed Notice

Water and Bread are always found by the Ship - Flour, Oatmeal, Rice and Potatoes and Potatoes are generally found by the Ship (one pound weight in all per day) Other articles all of which may or may not be taken.

Dried Beef or Mutton
Bacon, Ham or Tongue

Herrings and dried Fish

Eggs and Onions

Vinegar and Pickles
Tea, Coffee or Cocoa
Sugar, Treacle,
Currants, Raisins
Pepper, Salt, Mustard, Ginger

Soup and a
few Candles
Blacking and Brush

Senna, Epsom Salts or
Castor Oil.
(The ship has however a full
Supply of Medicine)
Chest or Hamper for
Provisions and lard to lash
luggage with
The Water Bottle, to hold three
quarts each Adults per day.

Kettle and Tea or Coffee
Metal Pot. Boiler and
Frying Pan.

Porringer, Plate and Dish,
Knife, Fork and Spoon

In New York there are associations called the St. George, St. Andrews, Hibernian and other Societies, who give advice and protect emigrants from impositions in proceeding to their destinations in the interior of the Country.

Samuel Thompson who is from Yorkshire in England and has been a many years established at New York (273 Pearl ~~Hughes~~ Street) is in regular communication with these societies and will give quotations, advice and assistance to Emigrants landing in New York by our Ships.

The cost of travelling in America is accordingly cheaper and we do not recommend Emigrants to make engagements in this Country for their passages from New York, with the interest of the Country because the competition in the different routes for travelling during the Spring, Summer and Autumn is generally very great and the rates very low.

C. Grimshaw & Co.,
12 Garee Piazzas,
Liverpool.

Ms. Note.

You cannot go to Wisconsin [sic] by any other routes from New York. Sometimes they go by way of New Orleans but no vessels go there now on account of the hot sickly weather.

Emigrants for America are advised to take with them such kinds of Provisions they usually eat at home and sufficient to serve them for six or seven weeks. Though it is not likely they will be so long on the voyage, it is well to be prepared in case Contrary Winds or calms should prevail. The Ship is bound by law to have ten weeks stock of Bread, and Bread Stuffs for the Supply of Passengers, to the extent of one pound weight per day.

Ships to America do not provide any description of provisions and the voyage to second cabin or steerage passengers, except the one pound weight each adult of Bread or Bread Stuffs. Never engage to be found with every kind of provisions included with the passage money, but begin your own stock. If you buy then in Liverpool and at the shops which are soley engaged on supplying Emigrants, see that you are not over charged. Some fresh baked loaf bread cut into slices and rebaked in the Oven will keep much longer than in the moist state, and perhaps be more agreeable especially in the early part of the voyage than the Ship Biscuit Bread. For females and children a few of the very finest Flour Biscuits or a Currant Loaf not much too sweet. A Ham shank or a piece of dried Beef or Neats' Tongues boiled and ready for use will be found handy and lasting the first few days of probable seasickness. Also a few dried Herrings or dried Fish. Eggs properly packed for preserving and cream boiled with sugar and

bottled up very tight are desirable.

Take no spirituous liquors unless it be a very little Brandy, which may be useful as a Medicinal restoration. A few Lemons to squeese into water; or Tamarinds to pour boiling water upon are very useful. Seidlitz Powders also. Exercise is needful to preserve bodily health, but an exercise cannot be had at sea to much extent, it should be substituted by mild aperients - Costiveness increases seasickness.

Emigrants sending deposits to secure Berths have many advantages if this can but satisfy themselves that they will be fairly dealt with and on the most reasonable terms.

Do not be persuaded in Liverpool to exchange English sovreigns for Silver Dollars or other Foreign Coin . Nothing pays better in America than English Sovreigns. When the rate of Exchange is high it is more profitable to deposit the money in England and take a draft on America at sight.

Letter 8 New York Aug.t 21/45

Dear Parents,

We arrived here yesterday after a very favourable passage of thirty five days indeed. We had it much better than we expected. I was only an hour poorly. Elias fared rather worse for he felt bad for a few days, we were allowed to come to town without waiting much in quarantine for all the passengers were in health. New York is like all other towns. Some streets pretty good but many dirty ones, the houses in general are very clean. One thing seems strange to us and that is the many trees that grows in the streets. And there are some very fine fountains in the town that send the water up about ten yards and it cools the place about for it is extremely hot here. We are told that it is hotter this summer than it has been for about twenty years, we have a nice treat and that is a lump of ice in what we drink which makes it drink so cool. We were better provided with provision than most of the passengers we have been left to carry us up the Country. We have our luggage in the packet office free of charge. We start on Saturday we have paid our fare eleven dollars and we expect to reach there in about twelve days. I believe these passage of the country is very beautiful. We never saw anything so pretty as the scenery is coming to the harbour for the banks and each side is covered over with gentleman's seats interspersed with trees which we don't see in the old Country so near the Sea. We are both in very good spirits and only want some work to do after toiling so long. There has just been a dreadful fire in the town which burnt three hundred houses down.

We will soon let you know again how we like the country.

We remain in haste.

Your sons

William and Elias.

P.S. Give our respects to all enquiring friends and accept the same yourselves

W. & E.

Letter 9

Wisconsin, January 1st, 1846

Dear Parents,

.....with the assistance of a Welchman from South Wales that came in the same vessel as we did we have the house finished and a place for the oxen made. Three tons of hay cut ourselves in October so you may think it is pretty good work in less than three months. I have also drawn about five hundred of the said rails from Government. Some two miles from here, you must fancy me with a long whip driving two yoke of oxen. All day when the only things that crosses my path are the wild deer and the flight of the prairie hens. It is very nice to be regretted that you would not come here soon if you still intend to come for all the timbered land about here with us taken directly it is almost so now...for there is taken no timbered land of any account to be got without buying at second hand there is a greater section of timber joining us to be had for about 500 dollars and plenty of beautiful prairie near us to be had at government price, but we are affraid it will be all taken next summer and that when you come we shall have to move still further up the country. We have bought forty acres of timber land to supply this farm in case we shall fall short. You will be surprised to find that the timber is so short, but so it is near the prairie it is all bought up to supply them with fences and fire wood.

We find this climate to be very good especially the autumn for we had it a fine clear weather until the 22nd November when it began to grow cold and there has not been any day this winter that we could be out working. It is some days colder here than it is with you but non[e] of the wind and rain storms as you have.....

We remain your sons,

William and Elias.

E. B. Williams,
Farmer,
Portage Country,
Fox Lake,
Dodge County,
Wisconsin Territory,
America.

Letter 10 from Elias (Williams) to his brother John Williams, March 9 1846) Wisconsin. [In Welsh]

In the latter part of this letter he refers to the quality of the soil He says it is black in colour with no stones or gravel in it, with grey soil beneath it. Strangely in other places after it has been turned once it is remarkably soft. He had never seen such a fine winter as this one. It was the trees that disappointed him most, as he had expected far better ones. But the yearly fire does them much harm, and there are more [marshes?] than he thought in which that big grass grows.

Letter 11.

Wisconsin March 10/46

Dear Brother,

.....I have reached my address thanks to the climate I enjoy pretty good health the winter here has been really beautiful the finest weather for winter we had not above two or three days rain all winter and most part of this time was as mild as we could wish for it, we can now resume for the year round excepting June and July which we expect to be hot - Inclosed you will find the tower plot for the tower we live in you will perceive that it is nearly all taken. Indeed we could not pick out more than two or three farms including my presumption. There is another 80 acres joining it a very pretty place with the river running the whole length of it, which I intend to lay claim to and then it would make two very good farms, but it is no use to go to much expense with them as we shall be obliged to move from here if you come here we must go and farm a settlement of our own, we shall not be long before we get neighbours. You may easily see by the town plot how the place fills as our house was the second in this immediate neighbourhood and can have assisted at the rising of six since we came here, my presumption only costs 1¼ dollars and it secured for me 160 acres of land for twelve months and then I can buy it sell my claim or "leave it alone" it would never answer for us to buy a farm for any of you as perhaps in one month all those joining it might be taken so that you would have to put up with strangers for neighbours, but if you do come here which you certainly will if you wish to live free from care as you will not have to provide for either rent, tithe or tax and as for starving here rest your selves contented for there is not the slightest danger, there is no doubt you would find it rather dull the first year for want of a chapel and congregation but that would soon be done away with for you can hardly have an idea how soon the Welsh would flock around you and you might act the 'Royal Family' if you have a mind. I say if you do come here we would then go in search of land that is suitable for there is plenty such and there and then buy what land you thought proper before interlopers come in.

On the back of the town plot you will find Elias' Farm. The sketch is not well made the lead marks very badly but if you want to know what sort of a place it is you must think of the waves of the sea and then you have it to perfection for it is undulating like that. Wisconsin appears a little uneven if you look at a sincle [sic] farm but get on an elevated spot and you would say it was nearly level.

Respecting the postage of letters the Charge is the same for a double or treble sheet provided it does not weigh half an ounce.

Fox Lake is getting to be quite a town. There was only one shop when we came now there are three, also a foundry. This country has been divided into two but Portage County will still do for the presents on the direction. This from your Brothers - Wm. and Elias.

Letter 12.

Wisconsin, March 17/46.

Dear Brother and Sister,

.....We expect there is such a change in the face of the country about you that we should hardly know it again.

Respecting the transacting of business we are affraid that it could not be done at present without great loss of time and expenditure of money in travelling as we live about 1500 miles distant from any part I could not go to New York with a Cargo in less time than 20 or 25 days about the same to Boston and New Orleans. We should also be obliged to have a storehouse in different places in the South as we should not always have boats ready to convey the Cargo. There is no such thing as getting a cargo about here as all we can raise goes to supply the imigrant[s] but in a few years the case will be different when all the land that now lies useless will be in full cultivation and by that time we expect that a railway on a grand scale will be going through this territory giving equal advantage with the older states. We expect it will pass within a few miles of the place we have settled in the way that trade is carried on at present is they have pastures all along the line and take care and forward the cargo. One will be at Milwaukee so that it is carried on much better than we could manage it at present. When the canal through Illinois to New Orleans is completed there will not be so many stoppages on the road as there is at present, the price of wheat here is from 63 to 75 cents from 2/6 to /3- of your money and Bushel Indian Corn 37 cents or [??]. Bushel Flour 4½ Dollars about 18/8 English money per Barrel but we have no idea what the charge would be for conveying grain to different parts, we hope to find it out when we get to know more about the country.

We continue to like the country very well. The climate is far surpassing the old country. We never knew such a winter in Wales as we have experienced in here, fine frosty weather nearly all winter and not colder than we could wish for it to be excepting some very few days We consider it splendid country for farmers. The soil is very fertile and requires very little trouble to cultivate.....Your affectionate Brothers - William and Elias.

Letter 13.

Dear Brother,

Wisconsin, March 17/46.

We have been thinking since writing out last letter to you that if Leah has her money at her disposal we could make a very good thing of it for her by buying with it the farm that I have preempted together with the 80 acres that joins it to make 2 farms and she should be a joint partner with me in the profits resulting from it or pay her 12 per cent interest (which is generally the sum paid here) for the money. There is no doubt but that the land will be worth about double the money in another year so that it would sell well if we are obliged to leave this town - Elias has a notion of buying Van Buren's ¼ section for there is timber sufficient on it to fence 2 or 3 farms and in order to do that he will be obliged to mortgage his farm unless Father would send him money for we think that by securing that we could procure farms for you all for there is plenty of beautiful prairie by here. The sum Van Buren wants is 400 dollars but we think he would take 300 as he is in want of money and has another farm.

Leah might send the money by John Williams or some other person whom you could trust but we would much rather Leah would come here herself. An early answer will much oblige.

Your Brothers

William and Elias.

Direct as follows
E and W,
Farmers,
Columbia County ,
Near Fox Lake,
Dooge County,
Wisconsin Territory,
U.S.

Letter 14. Wisconsin April 14th 1846. John W. Jones to Thomas Rogers.[Welsh]

In this letter he attempts to describe the land, saying that they landed in Milwaukee from where they went West North West, 43.23.North and 11.49.West of Washington until they came to the land he attempts to describe. The nature of the land in this part for miles around is long narrow ridges about a ¼ mile wide more or less with dry meadow or fen/bog between them or [marshes?] as they are called here, and there is good grass in them. Trees grow on these dry ridges, sometimes quite thickly and other times quite thinly. These are [?] oaks. There is no wilderness/desert as some think, but where there are trees one can take a wagon through them quite easily, without cutting any of them. The only treatment that Wisconsin soil needs is to be ploughed and pre-harrowed, sown and harrowed again and it will bring forth fruit a hundred fold and sixty fold, from the worst soil. Indian corn is even better, it comes a thousand fold and more. It is very good soil for potatoes, melons and pumpkins? and swedes. These last things are for cattle. It is also good soil for water melons, from which can be made excellent treacle[?] cabbage, apples, plums, strawberries and cherries and many other fruits whose names I do not know, which grow excellently everywhere. The main trees here are oaks, but there are some poplars, maples and many others, but there are not many beech trees in this part. There are here, rivers, wells and estuaries or streams quite often among the trees generally, and the water is good. The country is quite flat, and by looking at a river you could not tell in which direction it was flowing. All the rivers flow slowly south. There is also much land here which is not wooded and as grassland it is very dry and easily cultivated. These are called prairies and some of them are miles long and miles wide. They are very flat with trees surrounding them. The borders of these will be bought, but not the centres as there is no water nor trees for fields. There is also some land completely covered with wood which it is impossible to plough or cultivate without great difficulty. Yet one can go through them quite easily on foot or on horseback. The majority of them are [?] oaks. The land has been measured and planned in the same way here for 15 years. It is divided into square pieces measured from the right to the north from the border of Ilinois[sic] as in the diagram. [Diagram in MS.]

Everyone of the square piece is called a Town 1 2 3. ie from the west to the east over the country. A range is considered the opposite of that, from the north to the south, so that there will be no confusion when land is bought. Every town is 6 miles square and is divided up as shown in the furthest corner of the diagram, and is called section 1 2 3 etc. A section is divided into 8 parts as shown in the top right hand corner and there are 80 acres in every one, and every one is half a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide. No less than 40 acres will be sold. There are

trees in every corner of the section marked like this. Say that you are standing at the north east corner Town 10N Range 12E from the corner, that is the post, turn to the north east and you will see a tree marked like this T11N, then turn to the south east and you will see
Range 13E T10N
Section S1 and another B13E and lastly face the North West and see one
T11N S6
marked R12E Remember that you are still standing by the North East corner
S3G/E
Town 10N Range 13 East. This is the way to send to the office to pay for it, that is the land that I have, Town 10N Range 13 East and South West another of Section C, and the same for the other place.

He then explains the currency of the country (10 mills make 1 cent, 10 cents make 1 Dime, 10 Dime 1 Dollar, 10 Dollars 1 Eagle. Mill is used in the United States. A cent is made of brass, and an Eagle of gold. There is also a $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ an eagle also of gold. The rest are made of silver, there are $\frac{1}{2}$ Dollar, $\frac{1}{4}$ Dollar and $\frac{1}{2}$ Dime. There are $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents in a shilling

He then gave information about the prices of animals and food, horses from £5 - £20, oxen from £? - ? a pair, cattle from £2.10 to £5, sheep as with you from 5/- - 9/-, wheat from 2/- 3/- a bushel, Indian corn from 1/- 2/- a bushel, potatoes from 6/- - 11/- a bushel, butter from 6/- to 11/- an ounce., cheese /4, beef $1\frac{1}{2}$ to /2 , bacon /2 1/4 to 2/-, sugar 15 to /6 (just to name a few things).

Later on he gives the rates of wages. He mentions the fact that there are no taxes there, nor tithes which keep a masters servants at poverty level. He mentions the wild animals of the country.

He then turns to the weather saying that the ones who have spent a summer here say it is warm all the time here. During the night dew fell so that the earth was wet by the morning and there was a wind blowing. There is not much rain, only an occasional thunderstorm. I have seen it rain as much in one shower in Wales as it has all the time I have been here. He says that they have very little ice or snow.

He then gives more information about where he is living, and says he wishes to be remembered to everyone. As a postscript almost, at the bottom of the letter he says that there is plenty of government land to be had for 5/- an acre which is good land.

Letter 15.

Dear Brothers, Wisconsin July 8th, 1846.

We received your letter dated May 8th about a fortnight ago and were glad to find that you enjoy good health as we do at present. We are ~~glad~~ glad to find that the bill has passed the first reading, we must again remind you that the sooner this location is found out and secured the better as several thousands have arrived here this Spring and they travel the territory in search of the best places so that in a short time go where we will we shall only get the second picking.

Our opinion is that if <u>you</u> could come over here before the family with a sufficient sum of money to [enter ?] what land you should want, but if the family could come soon this way we should do would be to go and find a place settle ourselves upon it and claim it for three years (as so many do in this territory) when it would pay for itself - but if you come before the rest do not come without one of our sisters along with you. I do not see the use of C. Davies working here before the rest of the family as he can't settle anywhere until they come.

It has been first rate weather here so far not too hot at all. A nice breeze comes on every morning about nine o'clock which continues all afternoon. A very heavy dew falls every night which helps the vegetation uncommonly. We have now and then a thunder shower but no thunder and lightning to frighten us as I have been taught to expect here. When the full year is up we will give you an outline of the experiences incurred here as for the income there is no one here that has been settled long enough to know but from what the land will produce you must judge for yourself. The number of hands sufficient to manage such a farm as this ought to be three that is two men and a boy, but after the farm has been got into a good cultivation say in three years Elias and a boy will be sufficient all the year round excepting in harvest time, as after the farm is fined there will be no work going on in winter besides looking after the cattle and cutting fire wood. As for servant women there are none of the yankees keep them. Their wives do all the housework and make their husband's clothes &c - we plough an acre a day in prairie or land that is well cleaned. We sow from $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ bushels of wheat to the acre and it produces about 10 bushels

the price for which it is said here at present will be about ½ dollar a bushel but if we keep it until [next ?] winter I know it will fetch more as most of the farmers here are needing and can't keep it that long. A bushel of Indian Corn will plant about 5 acres and produce about 40 to 50 bushels an acre the price for which is expected to be at ¼ dollar per bushel. Potatoes managed partly the same as old country at produce from 3 to 4 hundred bushels. The price about ¼ dollar per bushel.

It is pleasing to think that the demand upon us in this country is <u>very small indeed</u> that is after you have once had a start I am aware that there is many a little thing wanted which costs money in first starting but if we were together on a settlement it would do away with a good deal of it as one can lend to the other, but we are also subject to misfortune in this country for one of our best oxen died yesterday. He was taken suddendly ill for we worked him part of Monday but found he was unwell. We turned him out of the [team] gave him some medicine yesterday morning but in the afternoon he died. We believe he was mawbound . It was unfortunate as it breaks our team and he was fat. We intended to kill him for beef against winter.

The mineral district is about [20?] miles South West from here, some give a good account of the land in that region but the majority are of opinion that any quantity of Gold and Silver to be found up the Lake Superior about 300 miles North from here. Congress have lately given 25,000 dollars towards the improvement of Fox River so that we have the chance of an eastern and a southern market, New York and New Orleans and Toronto. Upper Canada is about 400 miles direct east from here but if we had to go there we should have to travel about 800 over the Lakes &c. We passed it on our way here. An Englishman that came in the same vessell that we did to New York went there but did not like it and came here and bought a farm about 40 miles from here. Dodgeville is about 70 miles South West. Helena 60 miles Galena about 110 miles South West. I would never recommend anyone to pay their fare all the way at Liverpool as the Canals are a miserable conveyance to comeby the best way is to take the Steamer from New York to Albany, the Railway to Buffalo, then Steamer on the Lakes to Misconsin.

We have nothing in the world to do with the War here. You know a great deal more about it than we do here, we should be very glad if you would send us an old newspaper now and then. It will only cost us 3 cents postage all the way. I believe a cow yields 8 lbs of butter per week. We have five of them but have not had them long. It was late in the season when the droves were brought here from Illinois where we got them from. We have commenced making cheese, we Churn the milk the same as at home. The keeping of cattle is very cheap here. It only costs a few days in mowing. There is very little trouble in harvesting it here.

We are sorry to find that Mary Anne does not feel quite strong. We wish she and Leah were here. There are some very nice young ladies in this district. They pay us a visit very often. Sometimes they come here to drink tea with us. We have no fault to find with the American Girls. They are very useful for they can make Clothes, Hats, Shoes and many things that Old Country Girls know nothing about, but then they won't milk the cows, nor light fire in the morning, nor clean shoes, nor carry water if it be any distance from the door. But I have seen them carry water many times. Some Welshmen think that the balance turns in their favour but I am as yet doubtful although I am very fond of some that are here.....[from] Willian and Elias.

.....P.S. It would be advisable to bring beds and bed clothes and all other flannel clothes, the fashion here of making women's clothes is very different to the old country. Therefore it would be no use for the women to bring a great lot of clothes. What is generally worn here is calico. Tea Service and all earthen vessels on very expensive here, all kinds of Garden Seeds and other seeds, Hawthorne in particular, direct your letters to come by Steamer. We are obliged to be out in June ploughing, July it is harvest, August wheat, September Indian Corn, Potatoes bring [?] and Boxwood also with you

Letter 16.

Dear Brother Wisconsin, Aug.

We received yours dated 21 June, we are sorry to find that Jno. Williams has been unwell. If you have a mind to send money here, you can send an order upon a Bank in New York which we can get cashed in Milwaukee Bank 100 miles from here. We hope nothing will happen to prevent you coming here. We have had some days very hot here the Thermometre rose to 120 degrees while there was much electricity in the air but after thunder and showers it cools down. We have made enquiry and find that the average is not higher than 82 degrees. The hot weather has had no bad effect upon us although we had worked out a haying on the hottest days that we have had, and last Friday was very hot and we were sweating very much. When a thunder shower came on suddenly and wetted us as wet as we could be yet we took no harm, we changed our clothes as soon as we got home. Some few have been affected with bilious fever July and part of August has been the hottest time here, June is very temperate. As long as the Texians are anxious to be annexed to the United States I do not find much in them for interfering but we are so far from the seat of any War here that we do not trouble ourselves at all about it, we should be sorry if war was to commence between England and France as it would stop the trade on the ocean to the great injury of all nations. We are sorry to find that Mary Anne is delicate in health but hope she will soon get well. A sea voyage might do her good. Richard Jones lives very near us, his daughter, and another young lady from [Anglesey?] spent yesterday and part of the day before with us. R. Jones and his wife desire their best respects to you all and they say that they never were so happy as they now are. There are very good improved farms in their neighbourhood to be had for about 800 dollars the improvement on them being worth the money, and they are closer to the Welsh settlement so that you would be convenient to the chapel. His brother William Jones has taken a farm by us now and we have time to preach very often. Respecting the Welch association it appears that the parties do not know much about this Country, for you would not suppose that every piece of land was as good as another, for supposing that they were to buy a town as they propose perhaps not above one half of it would be tenable at present, over 80 might be as good land as the other, but perhaps there would be no wood or no spring of water or no marsh for hay and many such things it is all very well to get as near as we can together but you may depend upon it you would not put up with those conditions when you saw better

farms a little way off and besides the land that is not marketable will be lowered to 1 dollar pr. acre as soon as it has been 10 years in the market which will be in three years time so that you may be glad for such pieces to be joining your farms. And as to Welch Officers no "foreigner" is allowed to fill any publick office until he is made a Citizen which takes five years to qualify. And as for assistance if we require any the Yankees are the first and the Welch the last to render it (that's fact). We are of opinion that you had better settle about here as the land is generally good in this district. [for there is poor land to be met with here as well as other counties] the Wheat looks pretty well here, but there is no land in this neighbourhood that has been brought to yielding order yet it being all fresh land. Next year we all hope to have fine crops after we have got the land mellowed - the potatoes look exceedingly well on the sod as [they] call the land first broke. The moschitoes [sic] have almost all left us now. They were troublesome at times but we managed to drive them out of the house at night by lighting a fire at the door and allowing the smoke to come into the house which soon dispersed them. We have no apple trees growing spontaneously here but they are raised in a very short time here. We have strawberry bushes covering acres of ground here, hazel nuts, walnuts, gooseberries and most of the berries, wild cherry, plumbs &. There are fish in the lakes and rivers which we are told are very good but have not tasted any although there is plenty to be got at Fox Lake. Most of the timber here is oak and hiccory in which the walnuts grow. We have no sugar maple growing in this neighbourhood, there are plenty of them in this vicinity of Watertown about 40 miles from here. We make our own soap and candles, which is easily done. We like wood for fuel very well, this country stoves are made so convenient for cooking &. I will cut as much wood for fuel in the winter time in a week as will serve for say 6 weeks, but as for the other seasons we make no account of it. We go and cut for an hour or two when we have now seen the four seasons and find the climate certainly better than we expected. And as long as you say that your farm the last year did not pay the expenses are so few (after having a start on a farm) for you can raise enough to eat and some to sell. You can keep a lot of sheep to supply you with clothing, for [in?] this country farmers do many of them make even their shoes and hats, many of the Yankee women can go through the processes of carding, spinning, weaving and making the clothes for their families - which is something in favour of a Yankee wife. It will be too late for you to start in August for it will be too rough for you to cross the lakes. You must try to start earlier than we did, when you get to New York you had better hire carts to take

your luggage to the steamer on the river Hudson for Albany. On this steamer by paying 50 cents extra you can procure beds for the women and for Father. As for yourselves you must get the luggage put in as snug a place as you can, and sleep on them for you will start in the evening and be at Albany in the morning. There you must enquire for the Railway Office and book yourselves by the immigrant cars unless you find them too uncomfortable for Buffalo. You will go the entire distance in about 25 hours where as we were ten days going the same distance by the canal. My book says the charge is 5 dollars and 50 cents but I have no doubt you will be able to come cheaper at Buffalo. You must try to find out if there is a Railway along the Erie and Michigan [states?] to somewhere near Chicago. I believe there is one to be opened that goes within a few miles of the Lake Michigan on the opposite side of Chicago but if you do not find it so you must take the steamer. I believe there is one to be opened that goes within a few miles of the lake Michigan on the opposite side of Chicago but if you do not find it so you must take the steamer to Milwaukee. You will be about five days on the lakes. You had better provide victuals for six days when at Milwaukee. You had better get private lodgings for a week and send one of the party by the stage to Fox Lake from there walk here, then we can come to fetch you. If you were to send a letter we might be some time before we received it.

For your sea voyage you will find the dried beef and ham take well. We had some to spare. Of the beef bring a lot of oat-meel along with you for you will be able to make cakes on the vessel. Some flour to bake for the cook will bake it for you, make your [barm?] quite thick with flour then cut into cakes and dip in the sum and when you want to rais a loaf scrape some of it into your dough and it will raise it and it will keep as long as you like. Tea and coffee you will find very useful at sea as for cooking utensils you will find a list of them at the emigrant office in L'pool.

We should be glad if you would bring us a few pairs of working trousers, warm and strong those that will fit John will do, only let them be a little longer for Elias. Bring with you some short and long oats for seed, and some good barley for seed.

Provide yourselves with some cakes to eat on the Railway, and a jar of water and the least quantity of spirits in it as it will not be quite safe to drink it without. Or if you were to buy some water melons at

Albany they would quench your thirst on the road, and they are healthy and good. We have lots of them growing in this neighbourhood. We planted some but did so when it was late and they hawe not come up yet. Remember to bring a lot of pickles with you, for the sea voyage and take care to have your boxes made strong and not too large for they will be bad to move about - have your boxes made strong and not too large for they will be [bad ?] to move about - the size of Elias' largest box will do but the edge of round the botton be double by putting a kind of ledge arround them your luggage will go free by the railway whereas by the canal they charge very high for them. Please do bring me the second part to Wiley & Putnam's Emigrant Free Guide - any bookseller will procure it for you. I believe the price will be 2/6.

We remain

Your affectionate Brothers.
William and Elias.

P.S. You may tell those that enquire about Wisconsin that it is not a place to make much money in a short time but a place where they soon can get all the necessaries of life about them although we know of some even in Wisconsin who are getting rich already.

We do not recommend you to stop in New York more than a few hours. It is a dear and an uncomfortable place and nothing is to be seen in the city more than in Liverpool, besides the water works one of which you will find near the City Hall in the parish; leave someone on the steamer to take care of the luggage.

Letter 17

Dear Brother, Wisconsin Decr 2/46.

If you have not got Thompson's New London Pharmacopa[ia ?] I should like you to get it and include the price of it in the "Drug[?]" We continue to like this country exceedingly well and have no doubt but that you will all like it. London is a fine place. We have no doubt we should like to have seen it before we started. We have no doubt it will improve you very much. I should like you to pay some attention to bilious and typhus fevers as it is those that prevails in this country. h'ave had] some good luck myself with treating the bilious fevers. This[I part is getting well fill'd with Welsh now about two hundred attends meeting on the Sabbaths and about sixty numbers and we have excellent singing. Elias has undertaken to be teacher for when all the land about him is taken over our family will have to buy second hand and go somewhere else to farm a new settlement but I guess we shall have at present. Elias is very lusty and enjoys very good health. I have not been quite so strong as I used to be at home. I like your planning of stopping at New York to be instructed in the business very much although in this country but you may pick up something. I will write home to tell you that I have given you a lost of things to bring with you and you had better do the same before you execute the order.

With kind regards,

We remain your Brothers.
William and Elias.

Bring a small quantity of all the medicinal seeds you can get hold of as I am going to have a botanical garden, as I [can?] Cardam Mini et Maj. Hyoscyam: absynth: anisi &c &c

Letter 18. 1846 December 9 William and Elias Williams to their brother John Williams Junior. [In Welsh]

A family letter mainly. He says near the end that judging the land he had seen, although he had not seen it in full growth yet, that it could produce 35 bushels an acre, although the yankees say that it can produce 40 to 50 an acre. He says that they had a good crop of oats, but the blackbirds devoured it all. They are more fond of oats than any other seed. The blackbirds are the most ravaging creatures in Wisconsin. He tells the ones who are intending to come to Wisconsin to bring their mills with them as the mills in the area have a month's work in hand all the time. They will then be able to grind whenever they wish and the mill will soon pay for herself as the cost for grinding is so high.

Letter 19

Dear Brother Columbia County, Jany 16/47.

.....We think you had better not trouble yourselves by bringing any family with you if they are deemed necessary, they can come with the last party, but if you could get a boy about 15 years of age that could milk he would be of great service for us, perhaps you had better engage with him for so much a year until his expenses should be paid up - as for male and female servants they will not be required now, sisters will be able to manage the house work at the first commencement, for the boy will milk and churn - fetch water, wood &c.

Elias thinks that Bob would answer very well. At present we are of opinion that it would be best for us to move and farm a new settlement as so many Welsh are about to come for we should not be long without Company, but that we can decide when you come over.

I believe we mentioned before for you to bring working trousers for us now that everything woolen is dear here therefore stockings and woolen yarn will be articles. You cannot bring.....too many of and the women ought to bring wool dresses for winter (or home woven material is very good) You had better bring a lot of books with you as the leather here is very poorly turned. Elias wishes you to bring him a pair of strong watertights from Moses Jones as he thinks he knows the measure of his foot - such as he would use on Sundays in the winter is what he wants. Let the boots be a little too long and Elias wishes his to have Iron plates at the point. It would be well for you to bring some [special nails?] along with you for the tall grass here wears them out at the point very soon.

Glass is cheaper here than in England - bring a fine knife or two also other knives but think that the safest and least trouble of bringing your money would be to get an order in Liverpool upon New York and in New York upon Milwaukee and get 3 sets leaving one at home and send the other to us and the third to yourself. You will get a premium upon the money, but I dont know how much.....(It appears that mother is in trouble about a young women - Servant problems).

..... From your Brothers,
William and Elias.

Letter 20 Wisconsin Jan? 31/47.

Dear Brother,

You will please to bring along with you a compass and your claim for it will be necessary to house them in order to find out the section &c in looking out for land, and most likely you will find it profitable in other respects.

Also bring the Mill. The Medicines which Michael must send to meet you. The Welsh People about here recommended Mr. Davies Borth's vessels especially the chieftain. I believe they sail to Boston but you must please yourselves about the conveyance. We sincerely hope that the last arrangement you have made will be followed up without any impediments.

When you arrive at Milwaukee you had better put up at Mr. Morgan's house, Water Street, it is not a first rate place but we believe an hobest one that was the place we stopped at. You will then have to buy a good span of Horses and a Waggon to convey your things here, and if you can bring a stove as well as your luggage you had better buy a good one the price we gave was fifteen dollars without the piping, bring some Black Tea, Groceries, Raisins, Currants, Rice &c &c. Things that are wanted for the house use as they are much cheaper there than here. When at Fox Lake enquire first at Mr. D. Riemer's store for Mr. Austyn who will give you proper directions to come here. We mention this because we might not receive your letter in order to know when to meet you there. Remember Wiley and Putman's Guide. Our respects to all not forgetting old grandmother is she is alive.

This in haste from your

Brothers.

Letter 21.

Michael to Elias

45 Haymarket
London.

March 16/47.

This letter is written from London and concerns travelling to America. Mentions that William may return (he was considered to lead a rather unfortunate life). Risks of sending money across the Atlantic are great, so much better if it could be payable on a Bank in America.

Letter 22. 1847 March 26. Willian and Elias Willians to their brother.
[In Welsh]

In this letter he discusses their coming over to Wisconsin. He then says a little about the weather, saying that the winter has been a cold one, from when it started snowing on January 1st to the beginning of March when the snow began to melt. It is melting slowly without any flooding, although there is about 2 feet of it on the ground. The previous settlers have not seen so much snow on the ground here before. The cold and the snow was not so severe that we did not cut and sledge rails, four to five miles of them on the government's land about three miles away, one day and carry them home.

He then tells how the crops are cut. The corn is cut with scythes and **cradles** , and some say that they cut from 5 to 6 acres a day. Some cut Indian corn with an axe, a small sickle would be more effective.

There are many ways of threshing here, some with threshers other with oxen, but mostly it is done with an engine which threshes and sifts at the same time. We used the oxen. We put the corn in a round pipe and drive the oxen along it.

Letter 23 Wisconsin Apl. 20/47.

Dear Brother,

We duly received your letter of Feb. 15 and we promise you that we will use our utmost exertions to dispose of the money in the most prudent way, and we will also call on the aid of other friends to deside [sic] with us. We would much rather you had come yourself for we can assure you that we dont covet the office of purchasing farms for others.

Enclosed you will find the power of attorney to sell [? yr. ?].

Alas! poor grandmother, we are happy to think that you had got her to Plas yn Blaenau before her decease as it will perhaps save people's talk in making allusions as they would be apt to that you had been as kind to him, and also for mother to get charge of her money.

It happens to spring here pretty well now our wheat looks beautiful and promises for a fair crop. I hope you will take especial care of Mrs. W. W. and dont you run away with her.

Thus in haste

from your brothers

William and Elias.

P.S. And where is Mrs. Johns. E.B.W.

You had better bring the side saddle and Bridles and bits.

Letter 24.

Wisconsin, July 8/47.

Dear Brother,

.....Your letters dated May 7th caused us the greatest consternation and distress for finding that the farms were bought up very fast we had entered into an engagement for two places and were to pay for them as soon as the money arrived which we made sure would be about the beginning of June. John Williams' conduct we consider scandalous. Elias says he always considered him "a man" but by his late conduct he has forfeited that title. One of the places we had contracted for was sold as soon as the owner found our money was not forth coming to one Owen Roberts, Dylasa, Penmachno, and to prevent the other which is the best place from sharing the same fate. Elias is gone to try to borrow money. We consider it of the utmost consequence to secure this place for it is one of the best places about here and the more we see of it the better we like it, and it is the estate we mentioned about to you in a former letter. A part of it has been sold but there remains 485 acres with 70 acres under cultivation, there are three fine springs upon it and three log houses. The price is 2300 dollars and it is considered cheap. We have received authentic accounts from beyond the Wisconsin River and find that there is not a good place to farm a settlement there and that is the reason that we are anxious to locate about here as the land is exceedingly rich about here and the markets are expected to be convenient which will not be the case beyond the Wisconsin. I shall want a farm out of the fore mentioned Estates as my preemption has been bought and Elias will also want one, he says for it is in the middle of the Welsh Settlement and near the Chapel and he has 4½ miles from him to the Chapel.

So you perceive from the foregoing statement that it is indispensibly necessary for you to send money, I have received the £100 which you were so kind as to send me. I know it does not all belong to me but I hope to be able to pay you your due before long. When I receive this sum I shall apply it to secure this Estate I am going to start to Milwaukee this afternoon at which place I will finish this letter.

Letter 25

Columbia County W.T.
Sept. 4/47

Dear Brother

...I hope you will receive our last letter in safety as it is a matter of deep importance, but for fear you will not we have to inform you that we have bought the Estate which we alluded to in a former letter and a noble estate it is. Many people say it is the best if the country taking everything into consideration. It costs $2350 and we want you to send as soon as possible £450 either by Harndon & Co. or the Bank of England if that is not too expensive a way - Elias borrowed £100 towards securing it and I have paid over the £100 you were good enough to send me to the same purpose and the rest are to be paid on the 1st December next and I hope the money will be here in time -

Do you receive the "power of Attorney" which Elias sent you to sell his farm and what have you done with it? - We hope to see you all here next Spring...

From your brothers

William and Elias

Letter 26. 1847 December 11. Willian and Elias [Williams] Welsh Prairie to their brother. [In Welsh].

This is a letter telling of how they have sold one farm and mortgaged the other in order to buy land for their brother and family whom they thought were coming out to them. They do not seem to be coming now however, and this letter is a plea for them to send money to cover the debts which Willian and Elias have incurred in their efforts to buy land for them.

Letter 27 Jan. 28/48

[This is a very difficult letter to decipher]. It is written to someone he addresses as brothers, and tells of the financial difficulties of the family. It appears that the Bank where their money is kept has been closed for eighteen months so that no-one has been able to obtain money. He says in one part that he had gone to a fair to buy heifers and that it was there he heard that the Bank had broken . He hopes to be able to sell theirs again sometime. The general opinion is that everyone will be paid soon. He says that he has put an attorney to raise Robert Healey's money. Part of the letter is a family one in which he describes the weather as very bleak with much ice and snow on the ground, and he fears that everyone will die of cold and starvation. He says that the stock money has been spent, as it was raised before the Bank broke. There is a tax of 6/9 on every acre, £120 to be paid annually and the cost of keeping a house in Bangor.

Letter 28 Columbia Co. Oct. 25/48

William to his Mother. Hopes she enjoys good health, the old people in his ship enjoyed better health than the middle aged. His wife is a good and sensible woman.

Letter 29

Plas y Blaenau
Welsh Prairie
October 25/48

My Dear Brother,

Here I am in the beautiful Welsh Prairie and I think I could pronounce it to be one of the finest country in the World with its immence prairie and its magnificent openings. I do not think enough has been said in its praise. It's much finer to what I expected it to be. I did not see anything equal to it in coming through the immence regions from New York here, and it has its worst coat on at present. Just consider that when in the Spring when these charming hills have their green [?] on and those splendid Trees their green garment what scenery would strike the eye, for at present everything looks gloomy and dreary. Brother's property is considered to be as good as any in the country both for the goodness of the land and its beauty. And the spot where they are going to build their will command a most beautiful and romantic scenery. Their houses are indeed far from being comfortable. They are so very small and wretched looking. I think you should be very thankful that you did not come here when it was sooner, but in a very few years there will be fine houses and the Country will look ten times better when under Cultivation and fenced out &c. They are progressing as fast as ever they can - I persuaded myself that it was better for me to come down here, because I wanted to see the Country business conducted as its now a fact that they are going to open a navigation at Fox River and consequently there will be a Market Town built somewhere in that neighbourhood. Which will stand a very good chance for me and I think I shall have a situation at Columbus We staid in New York three days and half and we had much rain during that time. We had very fine weather to travel from New York here and beautiful weather to cross the lakes which we crossed in four days. We were not sick on the lakes. The worst part of it was the road from Milwaukee to Fox Lake. We came by stages but the road was horrible. We had to get through big holes and boggs, so much that we never expected to arrive at Fox Lake without having some bones broken. I had often heard of American roads, but never had the horrible experience but [we] cannot expect good roads in such new Country, but when you will be coming over there will be a fine [plain ?] road for you all the way, which they have Commenced about four days ago, which will be of great service to this country. Elias seems to be quite happy with his beautiful wife. She is a most agreable person and is considered by the Yankees and all to be the handsomest woman in the Country.....

I remain

Your Brother

Michael

Letter 30 Columbia Co. Octo 25/48

Dear Brother,

I have much pleasure in informing you that we arrived safe and in good health at our journey's end eight days ago and found all enjoying good health here. We had a very fine passage all the way especially on the Lakes which was just like a millpond most part of the time. The weather has been very rainy here this last Summer. The winter crops are not so good as they were last year, but the Spring Crops are good. I have much pleasure in informing you that the rivers and lakes are likely to be improved very soon and that our settlement is quite critical and the land about here is likely to make a rappid [sic] rise in value -

I saw Isaac Williams' Brother he was in New York selling his Cheese and Butter - I wanted him to send for his brother but I don't know whether he will or not. There is no news here to communicate at present. We are going to have the Election for president very soon. My wife joins with me in kind regards to you all hoping you enjoy good health -

From your Brother

Willian

Letter 33 Fox Lake 23rd Feb^{y} 1849

My Dear Brother

...I never expected I would have liked this country so remarkably well but the spring is coming. It rains heavy [now ?] when I am writing, the first shower of rain for three months past. We have had nothing but snow and frost since November and the snow is deeper this winter than it has been for six years. It's a foot deep. Last winter they had no snow, that is it melted away as it came down and a milder winter than in England, but this winter has been the coldest for thirteen years, and perhaps we shall not get one so cold again, for such term of years; they delight in snow in this country. How splendidly they enjoy themselves. The winter is their time of visiting and jaunting. You have no idea how splendid is their mode of travelling on the snow. You would be surprised at the speed they travel. Their Cutters slip away on the tracks which is as slippery as glass; and to pull to their beautiful and spirited horses who travel so swift that you would fancy yourself on a railway. We rap [sic] ourselves in Buffalo Skins which keeps one quite warm in the coldest weather. I have been very fortunate to have come here. Mr. Vandercook is a very clever man in his trade. I came here for two months and my time is up. On Wednesday next and I am now thoroughly aquainted with all its branches. I shall go to some City to see the Druggist business conducted after spending three or four weeks in Welsh Praire - It is quite a pitty I have not capital enough to go to business now start off in this town. It would be the best opening at present. All Welsh Prairie deal in this Town. [Vandercook's ?] customers are mostly Welsh. All Welsh Prairie are at me to go to business here. There is as much business done here as there is in Llanrwst, and there is only three stores, and they get what profit they like. There is a Welsh man with me here, of the name of Mr. Jones who would come and help me. I would do a great deal in Druggs here. They call for Medicine and there is none to be had. I am going to talk it over next week with Brothers as I have a mind to attempt it with what capital I have and keep a think stock till my credit would be sold at Milwaukee or N.Y. City. The experience to build a store would be not much, and there is a Welsh man of the name of Mr. Davies who I could board with, who is studying law in this Town, a very nice married man - I forget to mention in my last letter that Elias is very sorry for what has happened. He has been very much affected, that he so unintentionally hurt your feelings so great. He has vexed and vexed a [deal ?] about it. I beg to tell most sincerely that Elias is quite a different man to what he used to be when there. I suppose his most amiable wife, has been the means to transform - He is not the cold harsh Elias of old Plas y Blaenau, but the most kind and sociable Mr. Elias Williams of Plas y Blaenau, Wisconsin.....

Your Brother

Michael

Letter 34

Plas y Blaenau
Welsh Prairie
March 19/49

Dear Brother,

.....Our snow is gone away a fortnight ago and we are going to have an unusual early spring. The weather is beautiful and mild. It has already commenced springing up, and when this comes to your land, I will have witnessed the most glorious scene imaginable. They say that we from the old Country have no idea of the grandeur of this Country when it is dotted with its enchanting uniform. There is nothing but that you are all not with us. That disturbs my happiness. I have good hopes that M.A. will get better when summer comes in. I am of opinion that she could come first rate by Steamer , she would only be a fortnight coming to New York and I think that the voiage [sic] would be of great benefit to her health, and am confident when she comes to Welsh Prairie she would get perfectly well and fat as there are many instances of this kind.

I would say most sincerely that I continue to like this glorious Country better and better. Words could not express to you how good is my opinion of this Country, and I pitting you that you are detained so long from coming to enjoy it with us. I have left the stove at Fox Lake for two months. I had stipulated to stay in that time. I was sufficiently capable in that time, if I had all my money I would have gone to business strait off. There are some first rate openings in Welsh Prairie quite in the middle of the Welsh. The person has given up Shoping and all Welsh Prairie want me to commence strait off. It is a great pity you could not buy the middle farm. W. & E. are going to sell next summer. They cannot keep it. They want the money. It is a splendid farm of 150 acres. It would have been a splendid farm for you. I get 15 per cent for my money. Please to give my best respects to mother and Leah, hoping they are in good health. The same to yourself. Téll them to be of good spirits, to come over here, then we will be a happy family in the good sense of the word.

I remain

Your Brother

Michael.

Letter 35 Plas yn Blaenau April 25/49.

Elias Williams to his brother.

In this letter his brother, Elias says that he is glad to hear his brother has received the article which he sent to him. He hopes that nothing will hinder Cornelius Davies and his family from coming there that year. Michael intends to join with him, if he agrees, in starting a general store together with a drug store. He is sure that they will do well. Michael wants to go to Ohio soon to discuss business. He says that he is sorry M. Anne is still unwell, and prays that the Lord in his mercy will make her well again.

There has been more snow than usual, and the rivers, Fox, Wisconsin rivers appear to be blocked. The western and the eastern market will be open to them, about fourteen miles further up when the work which is being done there will be completed.

There is a quarterly 'cymanfa' to be held on June 7th also the annual meeting of the Musical Union [Society ?] is to be held on the 4th July.

Letter 36 Columbus Co. W.I. May 26/49

Dear Brother,

.....You can hardly conceive how glad I should be to see you in Wisconsin. I much deplore the cause of your being kept there, and should feel thankful if it pleased the Lord to save poor Mary Anne and enable you all to come in to this country.

I feel happy in informing you that this country enhances in its importance every year, and is likely to be one of the finest countries in the world.

Our facilities are very great being almost surrounded by the great lakes and rivers and which will soon be connected with the Atlantic and Pacific. Indeed they are already connected with the Atlantic. The great improvements in our neighbourhood will be started in about a week. Steamers from the Mississippi come to within eighteen miles from here now and we are the same distance from the central mart of the Southern and Eastern markets. There is a flour mill being constructed within half a mile from my farm. We have two blacksmiths within the same distance.

We are having our Chapel enlarged and made very firm. And the dissentions also are about commencing to build a chapel close by here.

The United States have lately bought a tract of land from the Indians and Michael has gone with a lot more to explore it. I would also recommend young men to come here to hire out as there is a very great call for hired help. Graig bach son might come here now and would be sure of doing very well as the Country is so far advanced that we can afford to pay for hired help. Therefore you may recommend such to come here with confidence. They need not be affraid that they would not be hired.

We bought a Threshing Machine not long since between me, Elias, Richard Jones and one John Williams and when we can afford to buy us a reaping machine we shall consider ourselves progressing. My wife and myself together with Elias and his wife desire to be remembered to you all.

From

Your affectionate brother

William

Letter 37

Plas y Blaenau
Welsh Prairie
May 31 /49

My Dear Brother,

Yesterday I recd two news Papers for which I am much obliged, we were very glad to see them. They were the first English Papers I had seen in this Country, they contain much interesting and important news. I find that Europe is as likely to be branded in war, and bloody battles have been fought. I find that France is quiet and that she progressed with the noble republic, and I hope she may be so wise as continue to do so. England is as if she were sleeping and groaning useless under her Iron rulers. What thousand pities, and there is very little prospect of other times. The Iron hearted aristocracy have the rub in England, that no material reformation can be brought about. There are some of your men, as to endeavour to do good, but will they be leaders can they get anything passed in Parliament. I would scorn to be living on a subject in a country, where such inequality and Christians treated as beasts almost. Oh happy lot is this. I would not say more as your feelings would no doubt be in a measure hurt that you are not here to enjoy the blessing of a republican land! I am now going to give you a brief acct. of my town in the Indian land last week. Seven of us started week to last Monday from Welsh Prairie, to cross the Fox River in quest of a new settlement of the Welsh that come over here in such a number. Some of my friends were for [Seling? sic] at Welsh Prairie, where for fixing in some fine tract of land, then their countrymen might know where to find some land, as Welsh Prairie and the whole Country arrd. is already taking up almost. But there is plenty more land. Only want to go thirty miles from here. You will find a little world and a splendid one without a single whiteman living in its vast rich land. We started for home, at 6 o'clock in the morning. A cover was put on the wagon drawn by two horses, with provisions for three weeks, with five guns. We arrd. at Kingston which is a village 12 miles from here at 10 o'clock. We bought at the stores sufficient groceries for the tramp. We started at 11 we dined at 12 in a circle on the ground. We had bread and butter and [?] which we relished first rate, As we had no time for cooking. We had some difficulty as to what direction to take to get to the Fox River as there was a place to cross it at Lake Buffalo. We were misinformed, were obliged to turn back a short distance. I am giving you a copy of my notes in the Pocket Book, in which I have put a few remarks of what was passing. We were informed by kind passers by that we were going quite the wrong way. He put us on a direction to come to a road that would take us to the landing. We were to surround a great marsh, on this

marsh we came across two large snakes. They stoped [sic] ill we had sticks that we might all participate in the fun of dispatching them, which was done in an instant. We have ten miles to travel to get to Fox River, that was our destination for the night. As cloudy and begins to rain, we have had the storm, it lashes our cover, and comes through a little, so forcible it beats the cover, we sing in hopes that it will abate soon. When on our third time it abated and we called it rather singular (four of us are members of the W.P. singing school, two of the Best Basses, one of the Best Tennor and another tennor who took the air, and I took part in the Alto. There was pretty good singing I can tell you. The sun shines as bright as ever. We set out to shoot. We have brought with us a vast deal of provisions. We shot some pigeons which were flying in towards above our heads. We had pretty good [?] We come to the Fox River a fine river and very deep, but not wide. As clear nice water full of fine fish, we camped near a house in which was close to the river. We arrd at half past 5. We went to the house, we got some water boiled, the family are very kind. He came from York State, the wife is roasting some coffee for us, we had a large fire made which blazed most furiously. We did not go to the house to supper, but knew we would have more [funn ?] in camp. We are within 3½ miles to where we are to cross the Fox, the night was wet and uncomfortable, but the [funn ?] was great; we all slept in the waggon, and droll would have been the sight if any one witnessed us, we slept very little if any at all, great was the revelry of the company. We had also a famous watchdog who was sufficient himself for the watch. Consequently there was no necessity for any one to be on the watch. It is dangerous if there would be no watch kept all night in these parts, as there are horse stealers sometimes. We got up at four a fine morning. We had a fine breakfast prepared by our excellent cook, who is really unequalled. The table cloth was laid on the green flowery ground, we sat on the beautiful flowers that covers the ground everywhere so charmingly, the Country looked beautiful which we came through, all openings and heavy timber in some parts. We came to Fox River about six o'clock, the river was wider here, but sufficiently shallow to cross with the team. It was difficult to get down to the river, the track was very precipitous down to the river. They went through the river with the waggon and left us on the Bank. On the Bank, there was a boat purposely made and left on the river side for the accommodation of travellers. The horses were up to their bellies when crossing. One of the two that went with the team brought the food for us, we saw a fine tall m n, he enquired for us on the Bank, there was a boat purposely made and left on the river side for the accommodation of travellers, the horses were up to their bellies when crossing, one of the two that went with the team brought the Book for us, we jumped in and had a nice sail across. After gone a little way we

met an Indian, the first we saw a fine tall man, he enquired of us for an Indian ponie, which he had lost. He could not speak anymore English, therefore we could not devise any information of him. We came to a Yankee's house, whose name was Tart; had been there a fortnight, he was going to build a saw. He had a fine Water Power, he gave us but little information as he had not travelled but very little. We went strait ahead north, all openings some fine land. It was rolling which made it look very handsome. Some of it had a great deal of land. We came across a very nice piece of Prairie and the openings above were very fine. In the evening we came to Macan on White River. We thought at first it was the Wolf, but we found when we came home that the Wolf river happened to be 30 miles from there. This river is very deep and I should think deep enough for a Steam Boat. It's a branch of the Fox River. We camped on its Banks. The marshes were numerous along the river, but quite dry to the river side where we were, the river we wished to cross but it was too large and deep. On Wednesday morning we went South, along the river. We came across a road, we followed through marshes and all for some miles, til it ended. It crossed the river; it was a winter road to the pinery, crossing the river when frozen, then we made for South. We inspected our compasses and took again a track north to explore this river in hopes to find a passover and another small river. We expect to meet with some prairies. We met with some Deers today, they were as usual too shy, and they leaped most beautiful. We missed them twice, one of us shot one, down, and as he supposed quite dead. He ran after the waggon for to take it in, when returning to his prey, he was just in time to see him rise, evidently from a trance, and soon limped away out of sight, to the Great Mortification of the triumphant marksman, who a minute before thought himself very fortunately. He was very near crying out. It was a fine large Deer, and lost a relishing dinner if he jumped upon it with knife in hand when it was stretched on the ground, it would have been safe, ~~be~~ he thought it was dead enough. Today the horses sunk very bad in the marsh. We had some difficulty in dislodging them. We have dined by the marsh near a small Lake. There are two geese upon it. We try and shoot them, but they keep quite in the middle of the Lake, as if taught to baffle our deadly weapons, and when fireing the [?] on the instant to a great distance. We are starting again, returning by the same road as we came by yesterday, in consequence os us being confused in the marshes, as there was no other outlet. We did not see any nice country today. My friend and myself were left with the team, and the rest went to explore the country the other side of the marsh where the team could not yet across to. We both returned with the team to the place where we camped yesterday where the rest of the company had just returned, When night was coming on, the exploring party had a narrow escape of being lost, they had travelled the country in all directions, and when the lateness of the day was calling them to return, they could not make out what point to take to meet us. They could

not gain any information from their compasses. They were as ignorant as a child as to what direction to take. One thought it was this way, and the other another way, and they felt themselves in a very critical position, and thought themselves lost for the night, as they thought he picked out quite rong [sic]. However they resingned [sic] to follow them. Even after he was considered the chief guide as he came strait [sic] a line to where they wanted to go. We had a frustrating place to camp for the night in a hallow ground in some beautiful opening near a spring of water. As usual we made a comfortable appartment in addition to the waggon as sleeping appartment, as you may well imagine that the waggon was much too small for 7 to sleep in; therefore we made a first rate shanty with boughs of Pople [sic] trees and sticks, which was quite comfortable for two of the Party, some of us scattered today, where some time before they came up with the main body, parties when lost soon join by signal shots. Thursday morning, with a glorious sun, and likely to be the finest day we have had yet, as it has been rather cloudy, raining and cold, since we started, and the weather seems to settle fine, two of the party are gone in quest of a Deer before breakfast. We have also a very capital second cook who is an excellent baker, they are busy baking, Bara Cri, for breakfast which when thickly buttered is very good, with some good coffee and very nice smoaked ham; we had also some first rate Pudding made with dried apples and Currants &c which was a great relish in this great Indian land. We are obliged to travel South the same way as we came at first, as we are endeavouring to get to a point on the river to cross. We slept near the prairies that we came through the other day. We looked more about and found them much the best place we had yet seen. Its only fault was that there was a scarcity of water on it, it will make a very firm settlement, within about five miles to Fox River; we took an Eastern route, we came through an immence opening some parts very good, but most of it with too much land. We have this moment ascended a high hill from the top of which we obtained a splendid view; we had been making for this hill for sometime; we could see as far as the eye could really. An immence tract of land. It looked from here like one vast forest of oak &c. We could see some other Lakes and Rivers, I imagined it to be a fine site for a summer residence, we could see Lake Puckaway far in the distance. I climed [sic] the higher stcak I could find on this hill. We came across an Indian trail, which we resolved to follow, which took an easily direction till we came again across the White river but much larger. It was here a large river a quarter of a mile in width its banks are quite dry and its water clear and deep. We dined on its banks. It was a very delightful spot, the scenery was very grand, the fine trees stretching through the Country that was so picturesque, the noble oak and other kind of timber lining its banks even to the verge. We had a little trouble here for in the wood we came across a stray pony, which we knew belonged to some

white man. We caught him directly and brought him to our horses, as we were for taking it with us, and leave to the care of a Mr. Tart who lived at Buffalo Lake; these enquired for, but however, we left to its fate, as we could hear from the other side of the river, the bells that are attached to Cows necks, therefore we thought that there was a settlement near, when we let go the poney, one of our horses a very fine spirited horse ran after it to the woods and got quite wild. We had a great difficulty in catching him. We at last got surround and closed upon him, and catched him after two hours exertions, and were much [?] pained from the fear that it might run away and never see him again and leave us in the lurch; in following the track and in a beautiful spot by the said river, we came across an Indian Burrying ground, there were 6 graves, made up with timber, they were likely to have been the graves of some chiefs, as we [sic] so none put up in that style before. The ground was made very nice about them with gravel, we were attracted to the spot by seeing a flag hoisted which was flying over a grave recently made. It was a piece of white linen tied to a long stick. We inspected the curiously built graves, and we could see throu a crevice in the timber a stick on the top of the flat gravel, the same in each of them, to keep the Devil off we supposed. From there we followed the track, as we were in expectation to come across some Indians locating not far off, or some Indian village, as we had not yet come up with any Indians, contrary to our expectations when starting, as we were going amongst hundreds of them, as we thought. At last we came to the first Indian Hut, on a rising ground, four of us went up with only one gun; we could see the Indians' Children running after us for protection as we thought and stark naked when we went up. It was a considerable Indian village, very pleasantly situated, on the Banks of a Splendid Lake. I thought the Lake was known to me. I soon discovered there were white people living the other side of the lake. We could see a village and some Farm Houses peeping out of the magnificent openings the other side. We went strait ahead to the next Indian hut. The children were running for their Boa [sic] and arrows, and very busy preparing themselves for an [action?]. There was in one grown up young men, who by the by was naked! Handling a rifle and one of our party says he saw him pointing it to us, but he says he saw him pointing it to us behind us,as if to frighten us. I could not help laughing at the boys as they stood with their arrows in readiness, for the poor things were frightened at seeing us, and never properly seen any white people before we spoke to a big ugly Indian who stood by the young man and asked him pointing his finger (this was one of the party who had seen [marying ?] Indians. He went strait ahead to them nothing daunted, to the Lake and asked what Lake, and asked which Lake it was. It was Lake Puckaway, but the big [?] ugly Indian stood like a pole in the middle of the hut and stareing us, without making a single motion, but at last the other man said it was Puckaway. By this I had myself known the place for it was the village of Marguette we could

see, where I had bought my town lot, which was increased since I was there before we found that there were Winambago [sic] Indians, always jelous [sic] of the white and don't make themselves agreable like the other tribes. They don't have any of the whites, however, we soon saw that our presence was not agreable as the little Indian brats were baulling out, "Go away", one of them took hold of my arm and pushed gently and said "go away". I suppose it was the only English they could speak, we took everything very cool. We went down to our party and impressed them that the Indians could not speak English, two of us went to the other part of the village, and I took one of the party who had not seen the Indians, and went to the same hut, without rifles, to try these Indians again, how far they would dare to insult us. We start there, looking about us and trying to get something out of these Indians, they behaved this time first rate, and the children buried themselves in showing us how well they could shoot with the arrow and we found this time, that the children were quite innocent as they had a piece of leather on the point of the arrow, they only played with it; we stayed with them about twenty minutes, the other party got an Indian that could speak English pretty well and of a different tribe as he was much fairer and dressed, he was quite a fine polite fellow, his manners were very agreeable, he gave us all information he could and offered to come and point the way to us which he did in most agreeable manner, he asked for some tobacco, one of the party gave him a small piece, and also gave him a ten cent piece, but when leaving, as they are very fond of money, axed if we had another six pence, which I readily gave, for which he was much pleased and thanked, and bowed with as much grace as any gentleman in the U.S. So he put us on the Indian trail that would take us strait to Buffalo Lake. This Indian was not painted at the face like the others. The men and women painted their faces with some dark preparation. The women were dressed and looked very like farmers and the men looked like the masculine of which, the men were naked from the waist down! The women were working very hard in the gardens which were in great number and very rude. We returned home safe. I fear I have already tired you. Nothing of any note passed the rest of the journey. The 12th I resume my letter, I delayed writing till the "Sasiwn fawr" was over, which was the first that was held in the Welsh Prairie, which took place on the 6 and 7 of June. The long exported day at last came. We had a sermon on Tuesday night. This day two carriages came from Racine, full of elders and preachers and others. The said town is 150 miles from here, and a lot from Prairieville which is near Milwaukee also some from mineral Point which is 200 miles off and a great number from Dodgeville and town where a great number of Welsh reside, and also from the surrounding Welsh settlements. Columbus, Rock Hill, [Prosciron?] Blaen y lac &c. Immediately at 10 there was a private meeting at 2 "by farfod ordenio"[sic] in which I was present. Our own Preacher Griffith Roberts was ordained, that meeting was highly interesting to me, as I had never been in one before, it

was very numerously attended. There was the amazing number of seventeen Preachers although we made an addition to the Chapel, it was pretty full. The Chapel will be handsome when finished, at 6 o'clock there were two sermons, Mr. Foulkes, Oscoss, [sic] brother to John Foulkes, L'pool, but he is of much more superior talents than his brothers. He is a first rate preacher every body was all expectation to hear him, as he had heard much of him. He had never been preaching here before, however everybody were taken by surprise. They never imagined he possessed such supperior talents, and every body declared that they never expected to hear such a preacher in America. He is the youngest of the family, he looks quite a youth. I should think he is from 26 to 28. On Thursday morning we thought the day would be wet, however it cleared up against 12 and the sun shone brightly and turned out to be a splendid day, being wet in the morning hindered a great number from attending, however the Chapel was crowded to excess and many could not gain access. At 10 Richd. Jones Dodgeville and Mrs. Evans Prairieville preached, but at 2 was the display of talents, a young preacher Mr. Davies from Mineral point who had never been heard before, and Mr. Foulkes, that the people thought that they were in the real "Sasiwn y Bala" at 6 Mr. David Williams Columbus and Hugh Jones (Betws) Colum. There were about five hundred people in the meeting, it was surprising to see so many Welsh together in a settlement that is so new, it was a great inducement for people to come to Welsh Prairie as it is considered by far the Superior Welsh Settlement in Wisc. and besides W. P. is considered the handsomest spot in this state and being the largest settlement and the singing is so celebrated throughout the Country, and they were not disappointed in either, but were quite overwhelmed each time. Our well organised Chorus of 46 in number. We struck forth the magnificent Choruses and well selected tunes and anthems, with great effect, such an anxiety rose in the hearts of the strangers when we struck the same notes, and wonderful was the gaze and the attention of the congregation. I never saw singing conducted with such solemnity, and in truth never heard in my life such good singing. The Americans are delighted with our singing to loads of ladies and gentlemen came to Chapel Sunday before last on purpose - to hear the singing. After the services we sung two pieces of Handel's in English and one in Welsh, the last piece which was the "Grand Chorus" Worthy is the Lamb that was Slain &c. They were amazed it was beyond their expectation and declared they had never heard such superb singing, and it had such an effect on one and the young gentlemen who had first arrived in Wis. from the Eastern States; that he could not help weeping, we frequently take a jaunt to the settlements that are around us to sing when invited, which makes it quite a paradise for us here. We were invited not long since to Columbus which is 20 miles off, which was a splendid jaunt in two of our light waggons and four spirited horses. Perhaps you are not aware that we travel in America as fast as our mail coaches. Our horses are not the chancy English Cart Horse, but the same as the English Carriage horses full of spirit and go, and never see a person walk with a team here, they take sufficient load and rains in hand on the box and drive

away like fun. We were singing at Blaen y lac last Saturday and Sunday by invitation, and Foulkes was there preaching, great many English attended. There were twenty of us with [teams], the weather was delightful, and the Country looked grand ? . We sang all the way in travelling through the magnificent prairie and openings. It is delightful to stay in the open air. The air is so pure and light it sounds much more musical than these. The great [ ] of fourth July is drawing near to com. the Nat. Ind. our annual Grand Concert in the open air is looked for with great anxiety. We expected it will be three times as large as the last meeting as we found that as many Americans intend to be present, as there will be of our own people who intend to come from all parts. There will be a great number of speaches delivered, on the art of singingfour or five different subjects on which, and a first rate man is to speak on Independence &c. We expect to have a most glorious holiday of it. I shall write to you and acct. of it. I will be off on the 5th July for the eastern States to see the Drugs Business conducted in this Country. I shall go straite to Utica and I wished to return on the twelve month or so. I should like to go to business then as the Fox river will be nearly finished and it will be high time for me to fix in one of the towns that will rise like mushrooms on its banks. I hope you will be able to come over next summer if not this. I hope the summer has made a favourable impression on M.A. She could not resist getting well if she were here. W.P. is remarkable for health and how she would [?] on herself. When I will be off I think I shall long a great deal more for W.P. than I did after Wales which was not a fraction, everybody when come near they don't want to leave it.

I remain

Your Brother

Michael

Letter 38

Plas Coch, Welsh Prairie,
Wisconsin.

August 5th/49.

Elizabeth Williams to her mother in law.

Mentions the large religious meetings. People here are as kind and friendly as in Wales.

Letter 39. Plas y Blaenau August 23, 1849. [In Welsh]

He approves of their decision to come to a country where there is justice and freedom. He gives news about certain people. He says he has heard that building houses is a profitable business, and if Elias' brother were to buy the farm that Elias owns from him, he would become a partner to him, if he wished, and build houses. He is sure that new towns are bound to be built on the Fox river, and he thinks that that is a good place to build. He has heard that building in Milwaukee is paying very well.

He says that he has sold 40 acres of land to build a store and there is talk that there is a town to be built also. The price was 7 dollars an acre . He had bought the land a year ago at the governments price.

He says he has been busy with the harvest, and that the winter wheat generally has been hit by the heat. He has started to sow wheat today.

Elias to John Williams

Letter 40.

n.d.

Mary Anne to her Sister and Mother

Family and domestic news.

Letter 41.

A Welsh poem.

Letter 42. John [Williams?] to his mother. [In Welsh]

This is a letter giving news about the family mostly, but at the end, he says that the farmers have to live very economically here and that they have not even a cent to spare. They dress in a very 'general' manner.

He then says that he has finished planting potatoes in the garden today, without any manure or anything, and that the weather is excellent for growing. It has rained heavier in the least few days than anyone remembers before. He then names the vegetables that they have. Lettuce, Radish, Peas, Beans, Cucumbers, Onions and Cabbage. They have nut trees from hicory , similar to walnuts, growing in the lot, a dozen and a half of apple trees and half a dozen peach trees.

Letter 43

New York, Sept. /49

M. J. Williams,
Mr. Eliot
Chemist
144 Seventh Avenue,
New York.

Dear Brother,

Perhaps you are surprised to find me in this City. I have left Welsh Prairie since last July. I staid five weeks at Utica, waiting the to about in New York. I have been here a fortnight. The City is quite healthy at present, and has been so for the last fortnight. There have no cases of Cholera been in this City for nearly three weeks past. It has entirely made its disappearance. I find that it has made its awful appearance in England, and even Wales has not escaped it - it was a most singular thing, not a single case occured in Utica, although it was raging in the Cities, that surrounded it. It was very bad in that City the time of the Cholera in former years - to a City of twenty thousand inhabitants. I enjoyed myself very much when in Utica, there are so many Welsh in that city, as would make you fancy you were in Wales. There is four Welsh Chapels there. The Methodists Chapel is the largest, they have good singing there, but <u>not as good as Welsh Prairie Singing</u>. I met with Mr. William Williams brother to Isaac Williams, Pandy on the street in Utica. I had seen him in New York when going up to Wisconsin last fall, but had forgotten that he lived near Utica. He pressed on me to go with him and spend a few days at his house which was seven miles from Utica. I went and staid there about a week, and had much welcome by the family. They are in very confortable circumstances - they milk twenty three very fine cows. W. Williams spoke a great deal about his brother, and wished very much he was with him in America, he desired me when I would write home that he should be remembered to him. He felt some anxiety about him for someone from the old Country told him at New York that J.W. was ill, and that his children treated him badly. When you write to me let me know a little about him as I have promised to write to him. His wife spoke and enquired a great deal about Mother, and desired to be remembered to her most affectionately, and was glad that Mother has the intention of coming to America. Then, she said, she would live in hope to see her. She is a very fine woman. They have a family of six children and they have an idea of going to Wisconsin some time or other. I left them quite well when leaving Welsh Prairie, and were sorry to see me leaving. Mrs. E. B. W. felt quite bad. She is such a good hearted and affectionate being. What many dozens of times she told me with that unmistakeable kindness. How enraptured she would be when you would all come over. Although she has not been acquainted with any of you, she is more familiar with you than you

are aware of, she often told her dreams at breakfast especially Mother, Leah, and Mary Ann and Mrs. Davies. They are quite familiar to her. She never sees M.A. ill, but Leah and her as lively as possible, always the same sort of dress they both used to have on. She could tell everything they had on, and she was so fond of them, but when awakened, alas, it was but a dream..... I am going to a situation in an hour to a very nice English Gentleman. He is a young man about my age. He is going to attend College this winter he is to be a Physician, and I have engaged to take charge of his shop. He refered a Welshman before a lot of English and Yankies [sic]. My salary is to commence with 24 shillings a week and board and lodging.

I must conclude by giving most kind regards to all and accept the same yourself. I hope that mother enjoys good health. Give her my most kind regards.

I remain

your Brother

Michael

Letter 44

Columbia Co. W.S. Sept. 29/49

Dear Brother,

I embrace the opportunity of writing to you by Mr. Thos. Jones of Liverpool who has been staying at my house for some time and is about to return to the old country tomorrow morning - Dear John I hope ere this that you have got your affairs settled to your satisfaction as I find by your letter to Elias that you are disposing of your property. I think you are doing quite right to come here as the means of living are greater here and cares less. We have not yet disposed of the middle farm and wher you come here if we have not disposed of it in the meantime if you fancy it you can have it. There is also a flour mill being constructed within half a mile of it and I expect by the time you come here they will be anxious to sell as I don't think they will have the means to complete it and will have the means to complete it and will be obliged to sell. I am happy to state that Wisconsin is progressing very rapidly.-

I attended on the Grand Jury the week before last I was occupied four days the cases were mostly from the western part of the Country called the Indian reserve and parties occupied on the pine business - I was surprised to find how conversant the farmers were on the Jury with the laws of this country considering they had been out but a very short time indeed they are not printed yet in book form. We did not do very well with our farming last year. Last fall Elias was by himself and was not able to get the wheat in season consequently our winter wheat is in season consequently our winter wheat rusted very much and was not even a third of the crop, but still I expect my produce will enable me to get all that I am in real want of this season. I have not improved much on my own farm as the middle was as much as we could manage but this year I have sowed six acres in wheat on my own and retain ten acres of the middle farm for spring crops. Elias does the same and the rest of it say forty acres we have let to a man who has put in twenty two acres of winter wheat in it the rest he will put in in spring crops. Our slave or rent will be the third of the produce. I have every reason to believe that my farm is a very good one but I shall not be able to get on very fast with it as I have not the means, but if I can keep afloat I am satisfied at present - Lewis Lloyd Nant y Wrach is working for Elias. I believe he has engaged him for the year with him. I am going to have a small boy to help me next week he is about twelve years old and I give him three dollars a month for the first two dollars and two dollars a month for the rest of the winter which is high for a boy of his age.

Please to give my respects to all. My wife also desires her respects

to you and all the rest.

This from your brother

William.

P.S. He shall be happy if you will make your home with me when you come over here. W.S.W.

Letter 45

Plas Coch, Welsh Prairie,
Nov./49.

My Dear Brother,

I was extremely sorry to find by Elias' letter from you that you were so unfortunate as to be unable to sell your estate, it seems as if it was the decree of providence that you should not come here yet. I sincerely hope that you next attempt will be more fortunate for it is my opinion that you had better not delay making another trial. Indeed I felt quite happy at the thought that you were emancipated from your thraldom and the news to the country depressed me very much. I was also sorry to understand that poor sister Mary Anne is growing worse. I am sure you must be very much afflicted. Please to inform poor M.A. of our solicitude on her behalf. Glad I should be to know of her recovery and to see you all safe at the Welsh Prairie. I understand from all accounts that things are in a very bad state in the Old Country and that many families of the better order are going to Emigrate to this country next season and I think the sooner they do the better Farming has not been very profitable here last season, the yield was only half a crop generally it comes rather hard upon me having begun to farm with so little capital but I expect that in another year I can get my head above water and shall not want so many things next year as I did this for I believe I have got all the Impliments of husbandry that I shall recover for the present and what money I have to spare next year shall be spent in improving the farm I did expect to have some for that purpose this fall but owing to the poor yield of the crop and having no dairy to bring in anything as I have but our milk cow this season and two other heifers which I hope will calve for next season and a good number of hogs I shall have to fatten next fall so that I shall be much better off. I hope seeing I have something to depend upon besides the old crop of the farm.

Dear John I long very much to see you here, you have often times been very good to me and I shant be able to return any of your kindness unless you come here, but I pray that the "All wise Providence" has in store your safe conduct to Wisconsin. I am rather surprised that C. Davies should be so fickle with respect to coming here I think he is very wrong but off course he has a right to judge for himself but I think a person of his capacity might do much better here.

We are in hopes that the Fox river will be open for business next fall and that we shall have a market at home instead of having to send our produce to Milwaukee which is far and a shocking bad road. It is the opinion about him that land will rise to about 20 dollars per acre for improved after that takes place we have not been able to sell the middle farm and perhaps in

the end it will pay better to keep it under them for when more wealthy people come here they may like to get a farm with much improvements on.

I hope you will write to me soon and not be cool towards me for it appears to me you have been more so lately than you used to be. I hope you have not been prejudiced against me by anybody and if you have I should like to know the nature of it. My wife begs to join with me in kind regards to you all and remain

Your affectionate brother

Williams L. Williams.

Letter 46. November 7, 1849. Elias (Williams) to his brother. [In Welsh]

He regrets that his brother has not been able to sell his land and come over to him. He says that the cholera has been no nearer than 40 miles to them.

He thinks that the acreage for wheat is 25 bushels on the whole, although some years it will be 30 and 35 an acre. The general price here is half a dollar a bushel, but in Milwaukee it is from 70 to a 100 cents. The price of a good cow is about 20 dollars and horses 100 dollars. He says he prefers the weather in this place as it is more settled with less rain. He then notes the excellent points about the country the kindness and fruitfulness of the soil/or of the country and the fairness of the laws by which no man is oppressed. The only point on which the previous place excelled on this one was the nearness of the market, but as Fox River will be opened within a year or two, this defect will be overcome. The canal joining the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers will be completed soon and they are at it as far as Green Bay.

He says that he intended building this year but failed to do so, but that he intends to do so the following year if he can sell the middle farm, but he thinks that perhaps providence is keeping it for him. He then says that he would like to see them coming to this happy country, and thanks him for the book which he gave him. He then gives him some news about certain people, and says that he has bought a new machine for ~~t~~rashing in Racine and that they are making a business of thrashing which pays well. The machine cist 290 dollars. Racine is over a hundred miles away from him; but he did not consider it a long journey, as there is the world of difference between travelling by team of horses and the way they used to travel at home because the horses are far quicker, and the driver never walks only when he wishes to. Our carriage is like the harness of horse coaches. He says that he has two good quiet horses, and that no one uses horses here only as a pair. Everyone here is well. He wishes to be remembered to everyone.

Letter 47

Plas Coch, Jan? 24/50

Dear Brother,

I received your letter on the 22nd inst. I am happy to find that you can manage your affairs so as to be able to come over here in the Spring, I hope Michael's opinions will not prevail so as to prevent you coming, for I find by his letter to me that he has written to you to that effect, for my own part I do not see anything wrong in it if you make all proper provisions for those you leave behind - for what more can you do for poor Mary Ann than to have her in the care of a good Doctor for the time being, as I understand you are not coming to make a permanent stay since you do not dispose of your property - I think it is a pitty that you cannot start in April for then Mr. Robert Roberts Tan y Clawdd's family and his Sister and her husband Mr. Evans [Draper?] son of Maes y Coed &c Bangor will be coming over and Mr. Roberts is to meet him in New York to conduct them here for when you would have a good guide all the way here and it is a much better time of the year to start in.-

I have given up my share in the middle farm to Elias as I had but little in it and he is going to let it for a year and he and his wife purpose going down east to improve themselves. I believe Mary A. Williams is to attend school in New York next winter to learn Music &c.

I am in hopes we shall have better crops next harvest. I have six acres broke on my farm and five acres wheat sown in it if I can raise money enough I intend to have twenty acres broken on next season and after that I shall not be afraid but that I shall do well here; I sometimes think of letting my farm and going patnership with somebody or keep a general store. I would stake my farm in order to procure goods. I often think that if you and I were to start in something of that sort here we might do exceedingly well.

Please to give our respects to our dear mother and the rest of the family and accept the same yourself.

From your Brother

William

Letter 48 1850 March 6. EB & MA Williams to their brother. [In Welsh]

Here he says that he is glad to hear that his brother is determined to join him next summer, and that his sister is better. He feels that this country (America) is far healthier than Wales. His brother Wm. is in financial difficulties and has sold his share of the middle farm to him. He intends acquiring two teams of horses. He has a small colt nearly 3 years old and would like to get another to make a pair. He has 5 cows. Within the last year he sold 350 (dollars?) worth of butter at 13c. a pound and there were two of the cows which did not pat. Butter is presently 15 - 18 c. a pound, the corn here 500, 60 to 70 in Nattertown and 75 to 90 in Milwaukee and is likely to rise. Building is a paying business, on the Fox River especially in Fort Minabago/Niwabago, or Winabago, which the Fox and the Wisconsin are within a mile and a half of each other. It is thought that the chief trading place will be there. The winter has been a mild one with little snow, and we are afraid of the wheat. He then says he hopes he will be able to come over by the next Gymanfa (big religious meeting) and asks them to bring certain things for him. From your brother and sister

Letter 49 Plas Coch, June 27/50.

My Dear Mother,

I am happy to inform you that I am the father of a charming little Baby called Anne. My dear wife does not recover her strength very well on account of not being able to procure a good nurse for her but I am in hopes that she will soon recover her wanted strength and health.

I hope you do not let your spirit get low in the absence of brother John, it must be very lonely for you at Plas y Blaenau now that all your dear children have left you.

I am glad to inform you that I expect to be able to be completely out of debt to everybody in this Country after next harvest which is saying a great deal considering the short time that I have been farming for myself. I hope that you enjoy good health and that poor Mary Anne is getting better. I hope Leah is quite well. Please to give my respects to them all and accept the same you yourself.

I remain

Your very affectionate son

Wm. L. Williams.

Letter 50. 1850 June 27; John Williams Plas Coch to his mother.[In Welsh]

Firstly he says that they have arrived in Welsh Prairie alive and well after staying a while in New York. The weather had been unusually dry last season and consequently the land does not look so flourishing. However it has rained a great deal since they arrived and all sorts of vegetables have sprung up quickly.

He then describes the Welsh Prairie - like a park before a nobleman's court. He says his brothers have good land with plenty of oak trees on it of the size of oaks growing in parks, and plenty of running water which is very important. They have much work to do enclosing the outer fields, and their houses are not very good ones at the moment, but they hope to have better ones soon.

He then gives some family news, and returns to information about farming saying that Mrs. Williams has enough from the chickens to buy groceries. Wheat is 5/- a bushell, and you will get £20 for a fairly good horses and £3-£ for a cow. The butter in the Spring was 1/- an ounce.

I have travelled many miles with Michael searching for a place where he can start a business. We have seen 2 or 3 places. One of them is a saw mill about a mile and a half from here. There is a little village there and the man who is keeping a shop there is prepared to sell his shop, the house and his share in the saw mill and the flour mill. There is enough room there for CD and him and they would have as much trade as they liked. Another place is Fort Winebago about 20 miles from here - a new place as yet, but one which is likely to develop into a big one before long. The West and East seem to me t there as a canal has been made to join the Fox and the Wisconsin. The other place is Oshccsh which is on the banks of a lake in the River Fox. It is a fast expanding place. There was no town there these years ago but now it has between 2 and 3,000 inhabitants, and it is one of the most beautiful places which I have seen. Already there are 2 steamers running there, another one about to start next week and another on half being made. I should imagine that it is an excellent place for a druggist. There is a shop there built on leased land, where the owner is ready to sell as he is going to California. He has not made up his mind where he will settle yet however. He thinks the country is ideally suited to young people with families who are ready to work. You must be ready to work as everyone is on his own here, with very little help from other people, but whoever works is bound to get on as the land is so fertile and so easily cultivated. The taxes are light here with no tithes here and it is far easier to sell your produce, whatever it is, than in Wales.

I would not advise anyone old to come here however because of the weather. I have been perspiring day and night since I came here until the last two days. He says he would have liked to spend a day or two in the old country again as the weather was so heavy and depressing.

He says that Elias has 370 acres of excellent land and William 155 acres of good land. Wm. is 'Justice of the Peace' and Town Clerk, and opperates as a lawyer here. He draws up the land deeds and agreements and all financial problems under a certain amount are brought to him as well as all the duties that belong to a Justice of the Peace, and he also marries people.

He then gives some family news and says that he does not know what to say to certain people who are thinking of emmigrating, because of the very hot and very cold weather, but that there are thousands of people living quite comfortably here despite the weather. He says that a farmer needs £500 after he has reached here in order to make himself comfortable, although there are some who arrive with no money, but get on quickly through hardwork. It is a country where laws are made in favour of the poor.

He then says he wishes to be remembered to certain people.

Letter 51. 1851 July 8. Elias and Mary Ann (Williams) to their mother.
[In Welsh]

In this letter Elias asks his mother to send him some money, which is the value of the land he owns, as he has borrowed money in order to buy land from William.

He says the weather has been very dry in the past months and that the country looked worse than it had ever looked, when John first came here, but that it has rained recently, and that the country looks very different now with the spring crops promising to be abundant.

Letter 52. 1850 September 18 John (Williams) Oshkosh to his mother.
[in Welsh]

The first part of this letter deals with problems arriving from his mother's land in Wales. He says he is sorry to hear that the potatoes have gone bad, but that the same thing has happened there in places. He also hopes that they will have a better corn harvest than they have had. It was too wet there and thousands of acres of wheat were destroyed by the rain, so that it was not worth cutting. The winter wheat flour was the only thing worth sending to Britain.

He speaks of one person going to a Republican School in Beaverdan to learn to read and write English, saying that the school does not cost very much and that the pupils stay with families and work for them, and by so doing learn the American way of cooking and doing housework.

The weather has been good for a while now, he says, and it has been wetter there than anyone remembers before.

He says that there is a large settlement of Welshmen in the vicinity of Oshkosh and he knows different families. He says that it is a pleasant town of about 2,000 people, and has 6 steam saw mills. Much building is taking place and 3 steamers come there every day. Michael has bought a shop and has procured his stock from New York which is about 215 miles from here.

They say that there will be 9 steamers on the lake here in the summer and that a thousand more people will have settled here by the end of the year. They are continually building here. Our lot is a Corner Lot and the best plac in the town as it is on the main street and near the bridge over the Fox River and also near the two main landing stages where the steamers land. A bill has been passed in Congress planning that a railway be built from Greenbay through Oshkosh to Fond du lac, and so to connect the town with all the railways in the Provinces. I think we are doing as well as anyone in town, if not better. We have incurred some costs with the building and we will have to buy a lot again in a dry place further into the town to be a sellar, as the river is too near to have one here. The lot will cost about $100. William expects to have $300 for his Stock, and $2000 for his farm in three years. It is a good farm and a profitable one. He says that he and Robert Lloyd bought 5 lots in fort Winebago for $275 and they are now worth around $800. Michael bought a 'lot' in Marquette when he came here first, but he will have no more than he gave for it two and a half years ago, although it could become valuable later on. He again

Letter 53

Oshkosh,
Wisconsin.
Oct. 9/50

My dear Mother,

Pardon me, that I have been so long without writing to you. I waited till I would be able to give you a full account of my shop and business &c. My shop is very handsomely fitted up. I am building an addition as it was not large enough. I am already doing very large business. My opinion is that Hannah might do very well here to carry on a general store. I have got too much business to keep grocery. I have got plenty of room to enlarge my building. We get on very comfortable. John assists me in the shop and Mary Roberts is a first rate Housekeeper. She is very much altered since she has been at school. She is quite a young lady now. She keeps me in the shop and is very handy. When at school she learned everything before her. She is very pretty now, and I have dressed her up very fine. All the young men of the town are [dotting?] at her. They say she is the handsomest young lady that ever came to this country &c. One of our first Doctors is for her, but Mary says she will have nothing to do with American Gentlemen. She says she will have a Welshman. The first ladies in Town call on her and some leave their cards, everybody wants to get acquainted with her.

We were glad to learn that Mary Anne is getting better. I hope she will continue to improve. I must conclude by giving my most kind respects to you also Mary Roberts, S. John joins me in their kind remembrances to you.

Your son,

Michael.

says that this is a land for young farmers and that farmers without families need £700 when they arrive here to be able to live comfortably.

He then tells of a dream which he had.

Letter 54, 1850 October 11. Elias (Williams) to his mother. [In Welsh]

In this letter Elias again tells of his financial difficulties he incurred from buying land which he understood the family wanted and which he now cannot sell. The price of land has risen with the result that many do not buy it now but instead go further on and buy government land. He says he is in dire straits as he has much land but no means of cultivating it, and he has to pay high interest rate on the money when he borrowed to buy the land in the first place.

The remainder of the letter is a family one.

Letter 55. November 27. 1850. John Williams Oshkosh to his mother.
[In Welsh]

In this letter he gives news of the family in general, then he says that he and Michael are partners in the shop and that William intends raising money on his farm in order to either join them or start his own business in Fort Winebago. He says that they have ready money for the goods they sell, and that they do not allow credit. They have the best shop in Oshkosh. They buy their goods from New York which is a great advantage to them as all in all they gain about a half of the whole that they sell. He mentions someone who he has heard intends emigrating. He says that the weather is not so good there as in Wales as it is extremely hot in the summer and extremely cold in winter. It is so cold there in winter that the shoes which one wears must be longer than one's feet because if one's toe touches the shoe it will freeze. Gloves must be worn all the time and one's hose and ears are without feeling most of the time. Drivers freeze sometimes by the settle in the waggons. This country is for making a living, not for living comfortably. He says he would prefer the old country if it were not for the oppression of the State and Church. If he had a thousand pounds he would be able to double them in three years and double them again in another three years. He then says he would be quite contented if he would not have to sell Plas y Blaenau as he would like to end his days there although the thought of crossing the land and see again makes him feel weak.

He then mentions matters relating to the family.

Letter 56. December 31 1850. J. H. Williams to his mother. [In Welsh]

This begins as a family letter, then it includes information about their circumstances in America. He says that when they came there first they bought a house and a kind of light carriage with four wheels which would carry them while they looked for a suitable place for Michael to set up business.

He says he is glad that his parents were unable to come over to them as they would not have been comfortable in the house that Elias had intended for them, and that he disagreed with Elias over the point that the family had caused him to incurr debts by buying land for them.

He explains that he went as a partner with William because William's farm was not a very profitable one. He would get up at 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning to go and look for the oxen in order to plough the land. There was no field on which the oxen could graze, but instead they grazed on the common which is perhaps millions of acres in size, and perhaps it would be 8, 9 or 10 o'clock before he would be able to bring the oxen to the house and he would be wet to his waist from the dew. After having breakfast he would go out to the field again in the great unbearable heat, tired and perspiring and the dust sticking to the perspiration till he looked exactly like a chimney-sweep. After all this labour he would not earn much, as the wheat was of a very poor quality. The corn harvest falls on the hottest part of the year, and when he went to help William when the Reaping Machines were being used to cut the corn, he would have considered it a privilege to breathe Wales' fresh air. He told William that he could not continue to work so hard, so they decided that William should sell or mortgage his farm and that they both should set up a druggist store in Portage or Fort Winebago about 100 miles from here where, there is no druggist store at present. They feared that they did not have enough capital however so decided to join Michael as there was plenty of business for them all there.

He then mentions different people. The Welsh Methodists have no Society here, but there is some excellent preaching in English here. There is no speaking of thieves here, nor of anyone fighting quarreling or getting drunk. Everyone goes to bed early and gets up early.

In one part of the letter he asks that if C. Davies comes to them that he bring a machine to make soda water with him. William can make soda water but no one else for thousands of miles can, and there is much demand for it, as the weather is so hot.

In another part of the letter he says of someone that his shoe froze on his foot and that it had to be cut before it could be taken off, and of another that when he was crossing the river his nose froze before he reached the other side, but that he used snow to melt it. The bread, the sugar and the milk froze some mornings. The river and the lake froze over in one night. He says that he prefers the extreme cold to the extreme heat as he can draw near to the fire. They have a good house, three rooms downstairs, a shop a waterroom and kitchen, four lofts and two closets. He says that he saw in the paper that three Welshmen were frozen to death by Buffalo Lake, and that he heard someone say that some old gentleman took his shoe off and that the skin of his foot came away with his sock.

The rest of the letter is a family one.

Letter 57,1851 February 27. J. H. Williams to his mother. [In Welsh]

This is a letter in which family finances involved in Plas y Blaenau are discussed.

Letter 58, 1851 March 5. Elias (Williams) to his mother. [In Welsh]

In this letter again family finances regarding money belonging to land called Nant yr Henfaes are discussed and settled. There is information here about a concert given in a nearby town in order to raise money to pay the chapel's debts.

Letter 59

Oshkosh, Wisconsin May 10/51.

My Dear Mother,

I was extremely sorry to find by Sister Leah's letter that you had been so ill, I pray the Lord may spare your life and grant you health yet a long time. I hope yet to see you before we go hence. I am sorry to say that my dear wife does not enjoy good health at the present time. Our child is very well and comes on very fast. She has always enjoyed very good health. We are now removed to Oshkosh where I am joining in partnership with my brothers. I have let my farm on a lease for three years. By that time I shall have improvements on it so that it will pay me pretty well.

I hope Mary Anne is better now than when Leah wrote to us we were anticipating her recovery, as very good accounts of her improvement in health had reached here. Yet still I am in hopes that she will ultimately recover - Brothers John and Michael are enjoying good health and desire to be kindly remembered to you and please also to accept of our kind love to you and Leah and when you send to Mary Anne tell her that we are asking after her and hoping she will soon recover. We are all living together at present in the house belonging to the shop. I intend to build me a cottage as soon as I am able. Dear mother I should very much like to hear from you, perhaps you will send me a line when you write next to Wisconsin.

I have no news worth relating to you.

I remain

Your affectionate son

William

Letter 59.

My Dear Mother,

I have no doubt you have been expecting to hear from us before this. We would have written sooner only that we expected John Williams every day. We were glad to see him arrive safe. The little girl will be 6 weeks old next Sunday. She was born on Whitsunday.

I have felt the want of my old Country friend at this event more than ever, William and myself have often wished we had one of our Mothers to be with us. My spirits keep very low, but I must by the Mercy of God I will yet regain my usual health.

Please to present my kindest regards to Mrs. Davies, Leah, and not Mary Anne. I should like if I would write each of them but I must beg them to excuse me now when I get little stronger I ran with more spirit.

I hope my Dear Mother this will find you enjoying good health, for without health there is indeed but little pleasure in this world.

We shall be very glad to hear from you soon with kind remembrance believe me to remain

Your affectionate Daughter in law

Elizth. L. Williams

Letter 60. 1851 May 15. J. H. Williams to his mother. [In Welsh]

In this letter reference is made to the concert mentioned in the previous letter. Concerts were held in Fond? du lac, Neevah, Fox Lake (twice) and in Wieseinab; and the artists/choir was about two dozen in number. He says that he doubts whether they earned enough to cover their travelling expenses let alone their wages, and that he had never felt so ashamed as when he saw his brother and sister-in-law travelling over the country and standing up to sing for money. He then tells how bad his brother's animals are, that one of his cattle has died and that his others are very thin because they were left out too long at the end of the year and not enough care taken of them. He has heard that his oxen are too weak to work. He then says that his own financial position is not very prosperous at the moment because they have incurred costs needlessly. They bought land further away from the river, costing 230 dollars, where they intended making a cellar where soda water would be made, and intended building a house there also, Now they have built an ice house on the present land and left enough space in the middle of it to make soda water, so that the 'lot' further in land is now of no use to them. He then tells of his brother William's financial difficulties owing to the fact that his wife insists on having a maid and living extravigantly.

He says that oats are the best paying produce, and that the business is not paying so well now as there are more of them living by it, and all partners in it. They are having a wage of 300 dollars a year each, and they are going to share the remaining profit, if there will be aby, according to the number of shares each one has in the business.

He mentions the difficulties which his mother is experiencing regarding the land which they own in Wales. They have had good weather, plenty of warm rain which nourishes the soil. He has set the garden and his onions, radishes and lettuce are out. He wishes to be remembered to everyone.

Letter 61 Oshkosh, Dec.11/51.

My Dear Mother,

I write this to inform you that my wife has presented me with another little girl, it took place on the 19th of last month, both mother and Baby are doing very well. We name the baby Elizabeth. She resembles me very much. I was very glad to find that Brother John had arrived safe in Liverpool. I hope he found you in good health.

I was very sorry to find that poor Mary Anne is no better. I was in hopes that she would be able to accompany you all here next season, for I really do expecttto see you all here. O! how I wish you all could come and have done with the extraordinary care that you are subjected to in the Old Country.

I am happy to say that we are doing a pretty good business here and it is likely to pay - Michael enjoys good health and is very attentive to business I am going tomorrow morning to the Welsh Prairie to look after the produce of my farm and to order improvements to be made upon it. I hope John will be able to sell his property to good advantage. I find by the newspapers that money is very plenty in London at the present time. I should think that that might be one thing in his favour. I should like to hear from you soon and be informed what prospects there is of disposing of the property.

I have no news to tell you further as John can give you all information about our getting on here.

Elizabeth and myself desire our best love to you. Please to remember us kindly to Leah and John and tell Mary Anne that we deeply sympathize with her in her affliction. Hoping that she will soon recover. Our kind regards to all enquiring friends. If you see Sister Hannah give her our kind regards as well as her Husband and family. Hoping this will find you in good health as it leaves us at present.

I remain dear Mother

Your affectionate Son

William

Letter 62

Oshkosh,

Oct^{r} 13th/52

My Dear Mother,

I ought to have written you before to thank you for the stockings you sent me and the children for which I am very grateful. I am happy to tell you that we are settled in our own home. I like it very much. You hoped we were happier here than on the farm. I do not think we are in our present position. We do not feel so independent, but I suppose it is better for us. William has not to work so hard, but he likes to farm much better if he had capital to make a start we have had to [feel?] our position here pretty keenly lately. I much wish Mr. J. Williams had never left here if we had known he would have left we should not have come here. Michael is trying to make a fine lady of his wife. He has even sent to New York to get clothes for her, but decorating the body improves not the [" ? "]. I hope you enjoy good health and that poor Mary Anne is better, we ought to write to her, we have grown quite negligen[t] in writing lately. I beg you will give our very kind love to her and likewise the rest of the family. I am happy to say we enjoy good health (thanks be to the giver of all good) the children are now very interesting. Elizabeth walks alone and will soon I think master Anne. I am very sorry Anne's likeness is so indifferent. We expect all summer to have another taken but there has not been anybody in Town that took likenesses. We shall be very glad to hear from you. William writes with me in dear love to you and writes you with due respect believe me to remain

My Dear Mother

Your Affectionate Daughter in law

Elizth Williams

Letter 63A Oshkosh, Wis. Feb.10/60

My dear Mother

Yours of the 4th Oct. came safe to hand -

I am very glad to find that you are midling comfortable and that your health is so much better.

I do hope that the money will be enough and that you can live free from worldly love -

I am happy to state that the children are all well, the little boy is very thin and does not grow much, but he appears well, and perhaps after he gets through teething he will alter -

I am getting to know that Mary Ann and child are doing well - and that they are prosperous -

I heard from C. Davies lately, I find that they are all well and have some intention of coming here. It certainly would be better for their children.

That revival appears to be a very wonderful thing. I hope it will be permanent and a blessing to the nation.

There is nothing of the kind here at present although we have had it some time ago but it soon died out.

Business is a little better than it has been but there is yet plenty of room for improvement.

I think my circumstances will be as good as before the fire as soon as real estate commands a price for I have some to dispose of in order to relieve the encumbrances on the balance.

I hope you and sister Leah can make yourselves comfortable there and that you will have agreable neighbours. We intend soon to have little Mary's likeness taken and when we do we will send you one, she is a very fine and handsome child - as for the boy I would wait until he looks a little better.

Please give my kind love to sister Leah and accept the same from

Your son
William.

Elizabeth desires her kind love to you both and would be glad if Leah could pay her a visit.

Letter 64, 1860 February 23. Elias (Williams) to his mother. [In Welsh]

This is a letter in which he hopes that his mother is well after moving. He expresses his surprise that John is going to get married. He includes a draft for £6.17 for the interest which he owes his mother. The greatest part of the letter is a family one. He says that religion is quite lifeless there and he hopes that the revival which is generally sweeping the land will reach them soon.

Letter 65 Plas y Blaenau August 30/60

Dear Mother,

I am sorry that I have been so long without writing to you. How often we neglect our duty on this point. Indeed I think of you there very often and feel anxious to hear how do you get along. This world is so stormy one wave rolling after the other it is a wonder that we are not "sunk in deep mire where there is no standing". But the Lord heareth the poor and dispiseth not his prisoners. Be therefore comforted for There remaineth a rest to the people of God". It seems like a dream that I have been there so long living with you and felt so happy, and now here I am far far from you, most likely never to see each other. I understand that there is quite a change at Pandy, a New Chapel and so many added to the numbers of believers what a glorious change. I rejoice to inform you that the same Spirit has been freely powered on our neighbourhood, it is impossible to describe it, we can only exclaim how wonderful!!! It is very pleasing to see the gay young men praying and praising God with all their might, they were at it day and night for a long time. About 250 went to a prayer meeting 24 miles from here they were singing and rejoicing in the train all the way. But that great time is over now yet the feelings are still to some degrees, and long may they abide. My young Brother Owen is among the most noted. He is very od[sic] his ideas are so strange and thrilling - I was at Oshkosh for some time in the Spring my two sisters-in-laws were not well then Mrs. M. Williams suffered from the Liver Complaint. She looks very bad, They have four very loving little Children. Mary Anne is improving very much she will make a smart girl. Her mother takes a great pain to learn some verses for her to go to the Society. She is very fond of her Cousin Lizzy. Mrs. W. Williams suffered very much from the falling of the Womb a very bad complaint the little Children are all very well and so good and interesting, though the baby is a very weak child. Mr. W, Williams is very fat, as fat as his Brothers there. But poor Mr. M. Wms. is very pale and thin still he is very lively and more so than any of them. It is for us, dear E.B. had a slight attack of the inflamation on the lungs. I do not think that his lungs are at all effected, but still he must be more careful than before and must work less. My health was poor in the Spring I suffered from weakness and cough. II took many Bottles of Cod Liver Oil, I am far better now but nothing like what I was there. I rather think that we must Change Climate. I forgot to mention that Mrs. Wm. Williams was there lately for 3 weeks she felt quite well when she left. Our harvest has commenced. We are afraid that it will prove a very slow and expensive harvest the Crops are very heavy and beaten down very bad the Season has been very wet it rains hard today they cannot work at all. Your dear son and myself join in [kind?] love hoping that your mind is rather composed under the present circumstances than your health will prove better in mind. love your daughter

M.A.

Letter 66 Oshkosh, Wis Jan? 17/61

My dear Mother

You no doubt are surprised not to hear from me eve this.

The fact is I got the likenesses of little Mary and the Boy with the intention of sending them to you, but owing to my peculiar position after the fire I thought I would wait until I could inform you that my circumstances were in as flourishing a condition as they were before the fire, and which they would be if I could only dispose of my real Estate, but owing to the disturbances South such property will be unsaleable until the difficulties are finally settled -

It is impossible to say to what the present disturbances will result. I hope not the dissolution of the Union -

Happily we are free from the Seat of troubles and our State is in a flourishing condition having now a Surplus on hand of sixteen millions of bushells of wheat which will be sold next spring and we expect will fetch one dollar per bushel, and that must certainly help our condition materially -

I am hoping to be informed by brother John's letter that Mary Ann is now happy, I always continue so.

I hope your own health continues as good as when you wrote last.

John has been quite fortunate in getting J. K. Jones out of the Quarry concern and I hope he will be more prosperous now.

The Children are so much improved since their likenesses were taken that I prefer not sending these but will have them taken again in the Spring and send them to you.

Anne and Lizzie are much grown, are getting to be good scholars and I had them learning music all last summer -

I understand you have very bad weather all last season, and that the crops have failed much in England if not in Wales -

On the contrary we had splendid weather here, and our crops were never harvested better and more plenty -

Our health has been generally good and I think Elizabeth enjoys better health than she used to, but I feel thankful that I have healthy children.

Elizabeth desired to be kindly remembered to you and sister Leah -

Hoping to hear from you soon. I remain with kind love to yourself and Sister.

Your affectionate Son

William

Letter 67. 1861 February 11. Elias (Williams) to his mother. [In Welsh]

In this letter he mentions a strong religious revival that took place in the previous year, the biggest that he has ever seen. The men and women were thanking and praising the Lord in the old Welsh way. He then mentions people who have been converted and who he thinks would make excellent preachers.

He gives some family news, says that his health is excellent but that his wife has had inflamation on the lung. He hopes that it will not be inconvenient for her to wait until Spring for the money which he owes her. The state is in such difficulties at the present that trading has become lifeless, and the price of corn is very low. He believes that conditions will improve before long however.

He says that many of the Southern States have withdrawn from the agreement and that circumstances are very dark at present. But he hopes that Providence will see the present disruption to overcome captivity in their country.

Letter 68. 1865 May 12. Elias and M. A. Willians Staten Island to his mother. [In Welsh]

In this letter he says that he had let his farm at the end of last yœar with the intentioh of coming over, but that when he had reached New York the rate of exchange was so high and the price of the passage had risen so steeply that they decided that it was wiser to stay in New York until the Spring. Things are no better in the Spring however. The rate of exchange rises and falls according to the forecast regarding the war. If the North were successful, and it seems quite likely, the rate of exchange would fall. He again apologizes for not having sent the money which he owes her but says that he would have to pay more than half the value of money to exchange it.

He says that Staten Island is a very beautiful place and similar to Wales in that it is mountainous on one side with many small valleys running towards the sea. He then gives some detail regarding the place in which he is staying, and says that he is undecided whether to spend the summer on the Island, as it is such a healthy place, or to come across.

He then closes with some family news.

A W E L S H J O U R N E Y T O A M E R I C A

N.L.W. MS. BOB OWEN, CROESOR PURCHASE, 1947.

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A WELSH JOURNEY TO AMERICA

It is due to Bob Owen, book lover, genealogist, clerk in a quarry turned W.E.A. lecturer, that Wales possesses a good deal of knowledge of Welsh American life. Owen was to win a National Eisteddfod Prize for an essay on Welsh migration to America; he was the acknowledged expert on Welsh Quakers in America. Neither fact is entirely surprising in a man who lived part of his life in the region from whence sailed Prince Madoc - that mediaeval prince who, sailing from Wales reached America and founded the famous tribe of Welsh Indians - the White Padoucas.

The anonymous account of a Caernarvonshire man, sailing to America in the late nineteenth century, has still the thrill of Madoc's heroic journey. Purchased by the National Library of Wales in 1947 from Bob Owen's Collection, this immigrant letter is a vivid and informative one, presenting a memorable picture of arrival in New York and a first glimpse of the Statue of Liberty. As Welsh migration to America might well have begun in Prince Madoc's crossing, so nineteenth century Wales greeted her new home with a salute to this famous statue, holding aloft the torch of liberty. "Hiraeth", homesickness, may have called many a wanderer home again, but to journey to America was to be guided by the rays shining from "the beacon of freedom".

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Clare Taylor.
Aberystwyth.

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N.L.W. MS.
Bob Owen, Croesor Purchase 1947.

Darluniad o daith i'r America (West Pawlett) yn y Majestic gan rhywun o dueddau Caernarfon.

An account of a voyage to America (West Pawlett) in the Majestic by someone from the neighbourhood of Caernarvon.

Leaving home is always a difficult task, especially the first time, and especially when you are leaving for America and crossing the ocean with the assurance of nothing. But as the proverb says 'If you do not venture a little you will gain nothing.'

In the midst of immeasurable worries I leave Myrnywerglodd. I cannot really express my feeling here. However, I steeled myself and proceeded with the task of saying farewell to my friends in Salem. I never realized how difficult it is to say goodbye, but the hope of seeing them all again is a comfort to me. While there is life there is hope.

By now we are both in Caernarfon saying goodbye to our dear friends. We are approaching the Landing Stage to board "S. S. Snowdon" and I shall never forget everyone's kind wishes to us. My feelings were so disturbed, that I did not know where I was until I found myself on board the ship amongst my dear friends, sailing towards Bangor. I will always be grateful to them for their kindness and good wishes towards me on the heart-breaking hour of parting. I do not know how I would be if I were on my own anywhere. Mr. Williams' kind company was invaluable in keeping me from depression. I proved how valuable a friend is.

We reached Liverpool and we had comfortable lodgings in Highfield St., On Tuesday we are in the middle of the hustle and bustle of the busy city of Liverpool, and somehow the liveliness of the place is sustaining my spirits. We spent a happy day under the direction of our dear friend.

Wednesday is an important day in our history. On the morning we saw the Oceanic coming in and my feelings were a mixture of happiness and sorrow. A wave of sorrow swept over me when I saw how glad everyone was to reach this side again. This made me think that the other side must be an unhappy place, and yet at the same time I felt happy as I noted the good condition that everyone was in. The time came for us to leave and we walked wet-cheeked with Williams to the Landing Stage.

We reached the "Majestic" and spent the afternoon on the river amidst hundreds of Irishmen and men of every nationality, it seemed to me, but my heart was in beautiful Wales and Ceiriog Hughes' words were ringing in my ears.

Wrth edrych ar fachludiad haul	As I watch the setting sun
A gwylio ser y dros	and night stars
Bydd clychau aredu yn y gwynt	Silver bells on the wind
Yn son am Cymry dlos	tell of beautiful Wales.

It is resting time, and we are like doves running each to his own cell and the ship sways and rocks us to sleep. I had little sleep however. I imagined I was at home running over the hills after the sheep and the lambs, but I was not there and the thought of my neighbours and my dear friends made me weep.

A bell rang loudly telling me that the feast was ready. Breakfast we expected, but I despaired as I thought that I had slept and missed my breakfast as the first thing that I saw was potatoes and meat. The look on some of the Irishmen as they ate made me laugh despite my sadness.

This is a strange place; it is a mixture of happiness and sadness. In one corner there is dancing and concertinas are being played. On the other men are lying like corpses in their illness, and we are in the midst of them consoling one another. We are by this time in Queenstown and the Paddys are busily loading our ship. Before long we sail out leaving the land behind us. The wind has risen and seems to rock us by lifting up the waves like mountains. Dafydd Jones throws a wave over our ship now and again, and we began to feel the effects of this.

We had seen girls rolling on the floor, and before long Dafydd Jones had had the better hand over us. We vomitted and sighed and cried for home, and we continued like this until Saturday. Mercifully Dafydd took pity, and we began to improve, and how grateful we were. We experienced strange feelings, and at times we longed to be at home, and would have been so glad to see the face of one of the old family who had come to visit us, but we were forced to do without them, and to battle on our own.

Mercifully by Saturday night we could move about and the waves had calmed a little. We rose early on Sunday morning and oh the strange scene that greeted us. Instead of being able to greet one another, on the way to

chapel we had to spend our Sabbath amidst people of every nation, so it seemed to me, who had no more respect for the holy day than any other day.

The first thing we had, instead of a sermon as at home, was a Shaving Saloon for about two hours, and after dinner (and I must praise the Sunday dinner) instead of having school as we did at home, groups gathered to play cards, to sing to the accompaniment of the violin, another to play fife. I never dreamed that there was so much defilement on the Sabbath day, and I was grateful in my heart that I had been brought up in areas where the Sabbath was respected. It passed however, but we would never wish to spend another Sabbath with such people. We went to rest, hoping to have some peace, but they sang and howled till the morning nearly. With this the hooter on the steamer began to sound loudly. There was thick fog, and we experienced what sea mist was.

From the middle of the mist our minds wandered back to thinking of the mist on the slopes of Nant y Bettws when we had left a week ago. We had spent a week away from home by now among Irishmen, Swedes, Hungarians, Germans, Japanese and Englishmen - every nationality it seemed to me, and we were only some three or four Welshmen among them all.

Tuesday dawned a fine day, finest we had had on our voyage until then. The sun shone and the breeze played music on the ship's strings while the waves rocked with happiness around us. After dinner a short, upright man strode boldly along the deck and shouted authoritively 'Down below boys'. Our minds boggled as to the reason why we were led down below. But before we had time to hardly ask one another there came another command 'All take off your jackets'. We began to look at one another, and thought that the plan was to make us fight one another. When we had all rolled up our sleeves to the armpits a harsh voice bellowed 'march beyond the way' and what was there but a doctor who examined us to see whether we had cow-pox or not. We were greatly relieved when told to 'Pass on' and did not have to be bled like some.

By this time we began to feel that we would not be long before landing, as preparations for landing were taking place. We rose early on Wednesday morning to look out for the land, but there was none to be seen. Nevertheless there was much preparation aboard ship and everyone was happy as they thought that we would land by the afternoon. Suddenly there was a 'Hurrah' and the cry of 'Land' and before long we were slowly making our way along the river to New York. We could see in the middle of the river a big tower, and on the top of it a huge statue of a woman extending her arm to the sea. Oh. how glad some who had been forced to flee from their country or be slaves there

were of seeing it we thought, as the motto of the statue is "Tower of Liberty" We felt glad that we were entering a free country. We had by this time reached the Landing Stage in New York, but alas, all the faces there were strange to us, and oh the sad moment when we realized how far we were from our nearest friends.

We arrived too late to land on Wednesday night, therefore we had to stay aboard ship until Thursday morning. There was little peace to be had that night. Everyone was happy because we had landed safely, and everyone paid homage to their gods, some by drinking and revelling, and some sang comic songs. We looked back sadly over the waves feeling again some enchantment in the swaying waves. So great are the works of the Lord, and such mysteries there are in the sea, so many creatures of all kinds playing in it. So beautiful was the appearance of some ships, full-sail in the distance like a beautiful palace. So beautiful was the reflection of the stars in the water, and we had long forgotten about the sickness and had forgiven Dafydd Jones, and I felt like saying "Oh that I was a little sailor"

Morning came and we ate on board the ship for the last time, before being led ashore. When we reached the land we felt as if the land was moving beneath our feet, but it was the rocking of the old ship that had made us feel unsteady.

For the first time we went through the court of inquiry, with some big yankee shouting as loudly as he could 'All open your trunks'. We passed the examination and were allowed through, but to our amazement we were led to another steamer to be taken to another island on the river. There we were examined closely and led, as if we were the worse people on earth, from one place to another as they chose. In the afternoon we were allowed to go from there, and instead of being allowed to see New York, we were shut in some place similar to Caernarfon Pavilion until nine o'clock at night. We had begun to think that we had committed some crime or other and that we were to be locked up for a day or two without food. About nine o'clock however we were in the train leaving for Vermont. We saw little of this journey, as we fell asleep and in sweet dreams entered the world of magic. When we were woken we were in the big station at Albany where there was place to fulfil the body's needs. We were there for three hours, and saw most of the town. It was here that we began to perceive the difference in the habits of the two countries.

We left Albany and went quickly to Vermont. The journey was a very pleasant one, and the country looked beautiful, and at last we reached the end of our journey at West Paulett.

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